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INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION SERIES

PRACTICAL HINTS FOR THE TEACHERS OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BY

GEORGE HOWLAND

SUPERINTENDENT OF THE CHICAGO SCHOOLS

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1896

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EDITOR'S PREFACE.

The present work belongs to the class of educational writings that deal with the art or practice of teaching. It treats of details of management. In our adopted classification, it falls in the fourth division, coming after (1) history of education, (2) criticisms and reforms, and (3) the theory or science of education.

The art or practice of education of course presupposes the theory of education, for it is the practical application of it. But while theory looks at the subject in view of the full scope of all its possibilities, practice singles out only what is of present utility, and neglects the rest. Theory aims to get a wider and wider view, so as to grasp the subject in all its bearings, and contemplate the entire range of possibility; but practice, on the other hand, strives to narrow its field of view, and specialize its act of attention to the situation that is actually now before it.

The two attitudes of mind are in this respect opposed to each other. The theoretic shrinks from action, and defers it, wishing to keep the question open till all the possible phases of it have been inventoried. The

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practical attitude desires to close the question, and decide at once in view of what is already known.

Doubtless each of these tendencies is one-sided and incomplete, but each has advantages within its sphere. Few minds are nimble enough to move with ease from one tendency to the other. For the most part, the teacher who is theoretically inclined is lame in the region of details of work; while the practically inclined grows narrow-minded, and incompetent to seize new truth. Goethe's aphorism expresses this: "Thought expands, but lames; action narrows, but intensifies."

Again, if the theoretic mind undertakes a work on art or practice, it is apt to waste much energy and force in an attempt to be exhaustive, for it devotes space to considering remote possibilities at the expense of more thoroughness and pertinence in the treatment of those phases that concern the present situation.

The best books on art and practice, therefore, come from those writers who decline to enter upon the exhaustive consideration of their theme; for this would imply an undue expenditure of strength on remote and unimportant subjects. They select rather the most essential or the livest questions, and attack them with a zeal so intense that they move people to action. For action is induced by concentration of the mind on one phase of the subject. The equal contemplation of all phases neutralizes or "lames" action.

That our author, Mr. Howland, has happily chosen the ten topics which he discusses in this volume with so eminent practical wisdom is evident from the following mention of their general bearings.

1. Moral training, treated in Chapter I, for example,

is the ever-recurring question on which hinges the whole business of the school.

2. The character of the teacher, his permanent trend in whatever he does, is another hinge on which the value of his work turns.

3. The memory—how much or how little it shall be trained in school-work, treated in Chapter III, is the most important question in educational psychology. Excess in memorizing produces a permanent effect on the character of the pupil, giving him a tendency to follow routine and to conform to custom, rendering him obedient to authority, and, in extreme cases, superstitious of precedent and utterly lacking in originality; while neglect of memory and the cultivation of critical alertness produces bold, inquiring minds, and, in extreme cases, tending to impatience of all authority, human and divine, and thus producing inclination toward revolution or even anarchy.

4. Firmly convinced that the old education was in error in laying too much stress on the memory, the new education devotes itself to arousing the power of thinking and independent judgment, and therefore lays the greatest stress on the methods of inciting self-activity in the child of the primary school.

5. As a topic for his fifth chapter, Mr. Howland considers the ideal of scholarship, for this alone enables us to determine the limits proper for the conservative memory-culture as well as for the radical thought-culture.

6. The demeanor of the teacher is almost as important as his character, and this subject is treated by the author with eminent sagacity.

7. A study of the permanent effect of seemingly unimportant actions or habits in confirming or neutralizing good precepts renders the young teacher more circumspect.

8. The class recitation is the central agency of the teacher for regulating the mental habits of the child. By the questions and criticisms of the teacher, the pupil learns the defects of his own method of study. He sees also, in the recitations of his fellows, deficiencies in other directions than his own, and this experience makes him more alert in preparing the next lesson. The teacher thus by the aid of the recitation helps and strengthens each pupil's mind through the work of all the others. The pupil gains new self-knowledge, and learns how to re-enforce his own perceptions and reflections by those of his fellows.

9. Next, in the matter of supervision—the relation of the head teacher to his subordinates—the author shows how one should so direct and control as to produce more and more ability of self-control and wise directive power on the part of his assistants.

10. Finally, the book is appropriately brought to a close with a chapter on the School Superintendent, whose work is to help each teacher by adding to his (or her) stock of knowledge and skill, the fruits of the experience of all the other teachers. The superintendent in his rounds of inspection finds devices which are used effectively by the teachers who have discovered them to overcome obstacles of one kind or another that are encountered in the discipline or instruction of the school. By calling attention to these he may aid this or that teacher who has not yet succeeded in mastering

the situation in some one of these respects. The result is improvement all along the line of methods of instruction, discipline, and management. The good superintendent continually works to the end that each teacher shall be aided by the best devices of method discovered by the entire corps of teachers; and by this he secures constant progress in the schools under his charge.

The felicity of statement in many of these chapters will tempt the reader to turn often to passages like the following, wherein moral instruction is defined as not the inculcation of a moral philosophy, but the discipline under which pupils "acquire a power of self-control, a command of their affections, passions, and desires, with the intent and will to direct them to worthy ends"; or to such passages as this description of good order in the school-room: "Not that fixed and monotonous routine, enforced by the mere martinet in discipline, that deadens the vital force, stifles thought, quenches generous ambition, and, regarding more the outward form than the inner life, aims only at uniformity, though only of dullness and stupidity; but that quiet, unconscious harmony that results from each member moving undisturbed in his proper sphere, in willing conformity to an unfelt but all-controlling power; no rules for the sake of ruling, no friction or jarring of ill-adjusted parts—none of the pomp and circumstance of military display, but all moving on to the attainment of a desirable end."

The fundamental conviction of the author is revealed in this definition of the true ideal of the new education:

"We believe in the new education as we believe in a new tune, though it contains not a tone that was not in the old, despised one. We believe in it for the spirit of humanity underlying, overlying it, inspiring it, which makes the child its subject, its untiring study, its ceaseless hope; for its truer appreciation of the child-nature in its restless eagerness, its longings, its love of nature and of life, and its ceaseless striving to acquaint itself with its powers, its capabilities, and its surroundings; and for the wiser presentation of subjects suited to each stage of its advance and development, skillfully guiding its unrepressed and gladsome activities into the fruitful paths of experience and wiser satisfactions, turning aside from the dreary waste of enforced drudgery into the fresh and flowery fields of earnest because curious effort; and we believe in it especially for the better understanding of things and their names, its nicer observation of qualities and forms, its clearer conception of ideas, and its finer expression of thought."

WILLIAM T. HARRIS.

CONCORD, MASS., *June, 1889.*

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

THE several chapters of this volume comprise a series of papers read before the teachers of the public schools of Chicago and vicinity, and were prepared with no thought of publication, but solely to aid the teachers in their daily and hourly work in the interests of the children who throng our rooms.

Though in no sense scientific treatises, they are the outgrowth of a large and varied experience and observation in the school-room, and are based, it is believed, upon correct psychologic principles.

It was their purpose to indicate the true purpose and spirit of the public school, the character and work of the teacher and her relations to her pupils, the proper sphere and duties of the principal, together with some suggestions as to the methods best suited to secure the desired end and make up the real life of the school.

To rid our schools of the old dull, dead routine, and make them the living fountain of health, happiness, and growth, to which we no more shall see the schoolboy "creeping like snail unwillingly," but with earnest, thoughtful face, hasting as to a new discovery,

has been the chief, the one aim of the author of these papers.

Though written for teachers of city graded schools, if of any interest or worth, the principles advanced and advocated are equally fitted for teachers of ungraded and country schools, and for any one interested in the welfare and usefulness of our schools in making happier men and women and more honest, public-spirited, and worthy citizens.

The one great thing needed in our schools, public or private, is that spirit of humanity and culture which shall make their life healthful, happy, and progressive, the wellspring of an upright, true, cultured manhood and womanhood, and a willing, working, watchful, and faithful citizenship.

GEORGE HOWLAND.

CHICAGO, *September, 1889.*

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PRACTICAL HINTS FOR THE TEACHERS OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

I.

MORAL TRAINING IN CITY SCHOOLS.

THERE are currents and tides of thought, as well as of wind and wave—times when certain topics seize upon the public mind, and, whether we will or not, demand a hearing.

The question of the claims and the usefulness of the higher schools is fast passing away with the hard times, in which it had its source, and from the ruins of fortune and reputation it is but natural that men, and thinking men, should turn to search for the springs of this wide-spread desolation.

And if the decade following that of the rapid development of the high-school system in our land be that when, above all others, integrity is a myth and honor a by-word, is it not fair to dwell there for a little, and examine into the nature and workings of the system, whether there be a deadly taint in the very streams that supply our homes, our counting-rooms, our temples of justice, and from which we fill the baptismal fonts upon our altars? We need not, then, be surprised or disheartened, when from the occupant of the pulpit, or the platform, or the editor's chair, come complainings, doubts,

and questionings as to the moral training of our public schools. We need not be offended, though many an honest and wondering citizen, listening, in ignorance of the cause, to their clamor, like Gilpin's neighbors, thinking they carry weight, cry out, "Well done!" to their unguided and unrestrained career, but rather should we throw wide our gates to let them pass, glad by any means to learn the truth, and apply, if need be, a remedy. For in a land like ours, if the public school has any leave to be, it is from its being a sure and efficient helper in making intelligent, industrious, and upright citizens.

It were easy to show, if such were the purpose of the hour, that much of the apparent dishonesty of the last few years—the unredeemed promise, the broken obligation, the violated trust, the commercial and official degradation—was, in a manner, forced upon unwilling victims by the unyielding laws of value, as estimated by a worthless measure—laws by which the enterprising, the public-spirited, the large-hearted, were not seldom the first and greatest sufferers, rudely awakened from their fevered dreams of uncoined wealth to the reality of want, hopelessness, and dishonor.

That the school, by the quickening of the intellect, and the inspiration of new hopes and higher aims, may have disturbed the rest and content of the lowly, we would not deny; but rather claim, and glory in the belief, that every child of the school, if not of the soil, whether his inheritance be reached by the course of the National Academy or by the tow-path, is born to a birthright of progress and honor.

The severest censure of our school system often comes from those who, in acknowledged ignorance of the schools of to-day, speak from the memories of their own experience of a generation ago, seemingly all unconscious of

the fact that the school has kept fully abreast of the advance in other departments of social and moral progress, of which their own charges, if rightfully regarded, would afford the most conclusive proof.

A few weeks since, while riding with a friend through the suburbs of an Eastern city, we drew up our horses upon a height, from which, across an intervening valley, we had a full view of the busy town lying beneath a summer sky, seemingly embowered by green groves, with their suggestion of soft lawns, cool shades, and sparkling fountains, and the sweet scent of fresh verdure, with here and there a white spire pointing through to the purer blue above, and with the outlying farms of thrifty orchards and fields of grass and grain almost rivaling Lamartine's picture of Damascus.

My friend said that an old citizen, long familiar with the dusty streets, on seeing a photograph taken from the same point a few days before, had remarked that the artist must have had a vivid imagination, as there was nothing of the kind there.

So, as with a sort of filial tenderness we turn our thought to the old home and school of our early days, the green memory of some task or sport—some new book begun or old one finished, some hard problem solved, the snow fort, with the gallant assault or defense, the splendid slide down the long hill-side, the brake booth by the road, or perhaps some sweet, childish friendship—seems to fill the whole field of view, and it is with a sigh of regret that we compare the present with the dear old days.

But when from the old chest in the garret we bring forth a fragment of the old thumb-worn, dog-eared book, from which the cover, as we quickly recall, was torn in a physical contest of the master with one of the big boys,

and turn the leaves traced with our frequent autograph, the pictures colored with poplar-buds, or the anther of the lily, or, as we turn to the master's copy, from which we learned to write, we can more justly fill up the picture; and, though we may smile at the awkward figures with their grotesque surroundings, we can but feel that the childhood of to-day finds itself in the school-room upon a higher moral plane and subjected to better methods and kindlier influences.

In judging of the moral character and influence of our schools, we are happily freed from the perplexing questions that divide the different schools of philosophy and embroil the metaphysician and the scientist. The cunningly devised theories of the origin of our ideas of right and wrong—whether an original endowment or a gradual development—we can safely leave to those who are preparing a system of ethics or moral philosophy.

But it may not be amiss to remember that the original of the word "moral" indicates a custom, a habit, pointing us not so much to our philosophic belief as to the conduct of life. And it is for us to inquire, not whether we teach our pupils the views of this or that school, but whether they do acquire a power of self-control, a command of their affections, passions, and desires, with the intent and will to direct them to worthy ends; whether, with a true and honest purpose, they go forth from our doors with a greater abhorrence of what is low and base, more faithful to the right, more sensitive to the breath of merited blame; whether, in regard for all that is ennobling, in courtesy to their equals, in respect for their superiors, they leave us better than they came, or rather, I would say, with a truer respect for the rights of all, even their inferiors. For to his superiors the boy, terrible as he is, is respectful—not to his superiors in posi-

tion, in acquirements, in age, but in the essentials of true manhood or womanhood.

And the keen sagacity, the almost intuitive facility and accuracy with which a class of boys or girls will determine the quality and fix the position of a new teacher, might well put to the blush our examining committees and superintendents, with their nice balancings of merits and demerits, and summings of averages.

Nor are we to judge of our schools by now and then an exceptional case. "There is no flock, however watched and tended," of which we are always sure, though the committee of the National Association in July report no graduate of a high-school yet found in jail.

The school is not the only force working within and upon the pupil during the school age. Even with the most punctual and regular in attendance not more than a fourth of the waking hours are passed under the teacher's care. And who can tell the home influences of many of them, their associates upon the street, the exhalations from doorway, and basement, and window?

Faithful and efficient as the teacher may be, there are influences and examples stronger than his and more constant and enduring. "Let me make the ballads of a people," says some one; but with how much more truth might it be said, Give me the first six years, and send to what school you will! The question of submission or lawlessness, of truthfulness or falsehood, of deceit or honesty, is decided, we believe, for most children, before they are supposed capable of understanding it.

Not from the school, but in the home, do children learn their first lesson. In their own neighborhoods are they taught to look for wealth without work, for profit without capital, and honors without honesty. Teach contentment and industry to the toiler and the needy,

with the palace home or storied warehouse of their mates rising before their gaze, the fruit of some bold venture or fortunate speculation? Not till disappointment has deadened hope, and suffering numbed ambition, will they accept the lesson. . . .

Nowhere, as in the well-directed school, is the spirit developed that regards character above surroundings, where merit is rewarded with success, and honor bestowed where it is due; and never, we believe, have our schools had a healthier influence, never made more earnest and successful endeavor for uprightness of purpose, or been surrounded or pervaded by a purer or more life-giving atmosphere.

In their very constitution are found the most efficient means for inducing a well-ordered life. If order is Heaven's first law, it must be the first and abiding rule of the school; not that fixed and monotonous routine enforced by the mere martinet in discipline, that deadens the vital force, stifles thought, quenches generous ambition, and, regarding more the outward form than the inner life, aims only at uniformity, though only of dullness and stupidity, but that quiet, unconscious harmony that results from each member moving undisturbed in his proper sphere, in willing conformity to an unfelt but all-controlling power; no rules for the sake of ruling, no friction or jarring of ill-adjusted parts, none of the pomp and circumstance of military display, but all moving on to the attainment of a desirable end.

We may all recall such instances, as far removed from the hushed stillness and bated breath of the one extreme, as from the restless, noisy turbulence of the other—an order which of itself is "able almost to change the stamp of nature," and is no insignificant factor in forming the character of a peaceful, law-abiding citizen.

But the most harmonious order, pleasing though it be, is of itself but a passive, fruitless virtue—but the casket whose golden ornaments and satin lining furnish no sufficient reason for its being, till the jewels are placed within—but the well-founded structure, where the whirring wheels of a busy industry are still to be put in motion.

And from the initiation of the inchoate man or woman of presumably six years into all the mysterious possibilities of slate and pencil, through the little round of prerequisites of a high-school diploma, the pupils of a wisely planned school are learning lessons of patient, persevering industry. Despite the idle charges often made, it is not from our school-rooms that the lounging squads of the saloons are recruited, or the street-corners replenished. A search for the graduates of our high and grammar schools would lead us through the stores, the workshops, the counting-rooms, and the public or private offices of our city—to the records of boards of education, or into many a cultivated, happy home. And in this day of invention who can blame them, if, instead of finding our sons delving in the dirt amid the horny-handed laborers, we see them, with upright form and comely attire, with steam and electricity to do their bidding, guiding and controlling a broader industry and higher interests?

If a habit of intelligent and productive industry be not the parent of moral virtues, it is, at least, their foster-mother and most approved nurse.

And surely it can not be that the intellectual culture of the school, small and imperfect as it is, the history of the past, the rise and fall of individuals and nations, with the open or more hidden causes, the unbarring the gates of science and pointing them to the boundless and rich fields beyond, the unsealing of the wisest thought and the truest sentiment of the deepest thinkers and divinest

poets of the ages—it surely can not be that all this is devoid of meaning for the moralist. We sometimes tire of listening to the dangers of intellectual without moral education. The performing horse and trained dog may, perhaps, feel no special stirring of their moral nature, but we are not made up of two so distinct natures, that, farther apart than the Siamese twins, the one can be wrought upon, and the other feel no sympathetic throb. The child may, indeed, be taught to lie and steal, but that is not what we mean by mental discipline and intellectual culture. It is rather a maiming and torturing of the spirit. As well might we call the foot-bandaging of the Chinese an athletic exercise, and Simeon Stylites a gymnast; yes, and the warped and shrunken starveling, or the phenomenal and gormandizing Tanner, a professor of gastronomy.

No; the order, the industry, and the culture of our schools, though indirect, and often unconscious, are yet efficient and ever-present moral influences, which we can not well overestimate.

Nor is the school wanting in that more direct and positive teaching and guidance that promote and establish a well-ordered life and character; not always or most frequently given in the set phrase of formal discourse and threadbare homily. It was not by permission, but by an undoubted inspiration, that Paul spoke of the "foolishness of preaching." Though made the means of "saving those that believe," the trouble is that the school-boy does not believe—in preaching, or in the teacher that preaches.

Well do I recall one such in my school life, who set apart his regular half-hour for so-called moral instruction; and if there was a half-hour in the day in which he wasted words, squandered the esteem, forfeited the respect, and lost the control of his pupils, it was that same

moral half-hour. It was the appointed time for restlessness, inattention, and disorder, when the exhausted patience of his hearers found relief in whispered if not in muttered complaint, from which a wiser man might have learned that it is not all of morals to moralize.

Noble as are the unquestioned motives of those who would introduce a text-book of morals for a half-hour of each day, we can but feel that, beneath the tender memories of their young days, a closer search would somewhere reveal an hour made irksome and unprofitable by that bane of a bright boy's life—a moral lecture.

The good old days of our fathers and mothers, when the pastor appropriated the last half-day of each week to instruction in the catechism, was not far back of the time of Deacon Giles's famous distillery ; and when the practice passed away, it was no exception to the law of the survival of the fittest. And even in the reading of the Scripture it is by no means certain that within the solemn covers may not lie concealed a leaf of Cæsar or Legendre.

The trouble with the dishonest and the vicious is not so often their ignorance of the true and the right, as their failure, through neglect or evil example, to have formed those habits of thought and action which constitute a well-ordered, a self-controlled, a moral character and life.

That we have attained the limit of moral excellence, or are doing all that can be expected, we do not believe, and certainly do not hope. It has been said that, when any work is completed, all real interest begins to abate. It is only in the progress, the pursuit, that the earnest zeal, the ardor, or the deep interest is aroused and held fast.

But it is not to the stated lecture, or the carefully devised manual, that we would most securely trust for im-

provement. Our memory and experience point rather to the quiet suggestion, the fitly chosen word, the interested inquiry, the look, the unfeigned sympathy, the favored opportunity, the firm but calm decision of the loved and loving teacher.

First, and best of all, would we look to the personal character and example of the true, the large-hearted, right-minded man or woman.

Perhaps I can not better express my thought than as I have elsewhere written, of this personal influence, which is the test and the crowning excellence of the true teacher —an influence unseen, perhaps, and unobtrusive, but all-pervading; free from the slightest taint of distrust or suspicion, but checking insubordination before the thought of it has taken form; exacting a faithful performance of duties, yet encouraging by its inspiration before despondency has attained a conscious existence; soft and gentle as a mother's hand on the brow of a sick child, yet holding the reins of authority, and controlling the very motives of action, like the hand of Fate.

For the due and full exertion of this influence we need to realize that, as teachers, we are engaged in the formation and development of character, into the warp or woof of which all the habits thoughtlessly formed, the modes of feeling, the pupils' deportment toward their teachers or toward each other, the kindly way or the uncouth manner, the listlessness or attention, the polite address or the unseemly reply, are all daily and hourly inwrought in permanent outline and unfading colors.

As compared with the life-giving, soul-saving influence of such a teacher, what were the dull routine of a daily half-hour of blundering monotony over the cold and dismal abstractions of some closet-conned and primer-planned system of morals?

Bishop Huntington, in 1880, spoke, with eloquent words of censure, of parents consulting the wishes of their children, whose wishes and choice they should themselves control; but such a personal influence as I have indicated, like the breath of heaven, penetrates the soft texture of the child's nature, quickening and shaping the very promptings of desire.

We can conceive no more sacred duty, or one which, with an eye to the public weal, should be performed with more wisdom and care, free from bias or prejudice, than that of choosing the teachers of our public schools. Suitable means and appliances are desirable; books for study and reference, worthy of our most intelligent regard; but we may safely leave all this to chance, or the whim of the hour, if sure in the choice of the intelligent, cultivated, and worthy teacher, of generous, sympathizing character, as essential to the mental and moral growth of his pupils as are good light and pure air to their bodily health. What a parody on the highest of callings, the reasons daily urged for engaging in it!—a sick husband, brother, or child; my mother a widow; my wages insufficient; have been unfortunate in business; I should be benefited by a change; want an opportunity to review my studies; need rest before engaging in my profession; think I should like Chicago—in all the endless variety into which these types may be developed.

Thankful may we be that from the ranks of the weary, the needy, the changeling, the improvident, the unfortunate, so few of the unworthy have found a refuge in our school-rooms.

In the management and discipline of the school, notwithstanding the doubts and forebodings of individuals, and notwithstanding the example and protests of our wise Eastern brethren, we believe that the prohibition of cor-

poral punishment is a real forward step in the moral training of our schools. It may be questioned whether such chastisement is ever inflicted by the thoughtful teacher, or parent, without an after-sentiment of regret or shame, from the feeling that, after all, it was but a victory of brute force, simply because he was the stronger, and must have ended in the same way even if the child had been in the right. "Do you know why I whip you?" asked a fond father of his little son. "Yes, sir, because you are the biggest." And not unfrequently there is a rude awakening, on one or both sides, of the mere animal nature, insensible alike to the claims of right or reason. But cut off from this ready resort, the difficulty of the situation often necessitates a timely delay and a more careful examination, a study of the child's character and needs, resulting in a calmer and juster decision and treatment, and certainly leaves the teacher less open to the suspicion of angry or revengeful motives. A suggestion need not always be given in the form of a reproof, and in cases of deserved censure it will be found, in most instances, more wholesome if administered in private. A spirited boy of ten or fifteen, called up for rebuke in the presence of his mates, all watching with eager interest, and to whose opinion of his brave and manly bearing he is keenly alive, and the same boy listening to the quiet, earnest, and kindly words of his teacher, with none of his companions near, or knowing of the interview, are two very different characters, in whose judgment the *rôle* of the teacher, too, is greatly changed. What in the one case was the harsh, unfeeling censor, to whom concession savored of cowardice, is, in the other, the feeling and judicious friend.

Nor is it always the pupil most familiar with the rules of kindness and courtesy at home who most readily re-

sponds to the voice of reason. And among the sweetest, the most genuine pleasures of these later years, I count the thanks, sometimes mingled with regrets, of the troublous, bothersome boys of old.

And of the eight or ten whom I would recall as the phenomenally bad boys of school, I do not know of one who is not to-day a useful and respected citizen, though some of them drew upon our stock of patience and forbearance to the very verge of bankruptcy.

There are those, I am aware, to whom all this is a dead language; who, at the suggestion of kindness, understand weakness, and for politeness imagine only a sickly sentimentality, ever ready with the reply that they could be easy, as well as any one, in not correcting faults, or insisting upon good lessons, their very excuses showing an utter want of apprehension of what is intended. I would abate no jot of any healthful requirement, but only ask for a prompter because a willing obedience; and more thorough preparation, because a work of the heart as well as the head.

A command may be in order in the prison or the barracks, but in the school, as in the family, never, except as a kind of punishment. At the stern order to "take my hand out of my pocket," what a strange yearning ran tingling down to the very ends of my fingers, till the blood seemed to settle under the nails—an inextinguishable yearning for the bottom of that pocket!

You have no time, you say, amid the press of school duties, to waste on mere forms of polite phraseology? What! no time to be a lady or a gentleman? Then you have no place in the teacher's chair, whose occupant should never be aught else.

And when all efforts prove futile, and the benefit to the pupil becomes hopelessly incommensurate with the

harm his presence brings upon the school, let him be becomingly remitted to the care of his legal and responsible guardian, to whose natural or parental instincts we may assume, as the law has done, the charge may be more safely confided. In the school-room, and within his own domain, the teacher stands in his own right, and will wisely omit those functions which only, as installed in *loco parentis,* he is allowed to exercise.

I am aware of the heresy, to some minds, of these views, but am trying to present what seems to me the only true basis for the teacher's authority — that his powers inhere of right in his office, whatever dicta to the contrary may be burrowed from among the dusty decisions of forgotten judges. We need not that any *parentis locus* should be assigned us by the hocus-pocus of legal or judicial legerdemain, nor would we extend the limits of our domain beyond their natural bounds. We believe that school-grounds are defined, as any other grounds, by their legal boundaries, and that if the unruly urchin breaks his neighbor's windows, or pilfers his peanut-stand, on the way to or from school, the sufferer should look to the parent for redress ; and that, in case of accident or harm, the parent, and not the teacher, should employ the physician and pay the nurse. But we also believe that whatever exerts a baneful influence upon the school, or serves to bring it into disrepute, whether done within the precincts of the school-yard, upon the neighbor's grounds, "or in the continuous woods where rolls the Oregon," comes under the legitimate cognizance of the teacher, who, in the jealous care of his charge, may counsel, censure, or condemn.

But why the school-grounds should extend to the father's door, rather than the home circle expand to the school entrance, is to us a mystery.

The parent is charged with the duty of providing clothing, food, shelter, and home-training, and is responsible to society for any neglect; and under a like responsibility is the teacher charged with his mental and moral training at school. The duties and the rights of the one, within his province, are as sacred and original, we apprehend, as the other.

What is to be gained by this assumption of another's part, which, by-the-way, is never urged, as we remember, except as involving the right to maul, maim, or mangle—a right that teachers or parents desirous of exercising it should be left to maintain with their best blows upon each other, with the children behind to prick and goad them on?

As to the proper treatment of specific cases, and, in truth, as to general management and instruction, there is no rigid, unvarying method suited to all individuals, or to the same individual at all times. But for those fitted by culture, character, and disposition to be teachers, within certain limits, on which all thoughtful experience agrees, their usefulness is largely increased by a large infusion of their own personality; and, we fancy, the weightiest charge that can be brought against normal schools is, that their pupils are so often charged and overcharged with the idea that theirs is the way, and the only way, and hence their unwillingness to adapt themselves to their situation and surroundings, impervious to the advice and counsels of their associates or superiors.

But, if there be one thing never to be lost sight of, it is that somehow the children should be interested in their work. The only point that Colonel Parker insists upon, and the one that makes the thought of school a delight to every parent's heart, is that the school shall be made pleasant to the children; that they may no longer "creep

like snail unwillingly to school," but that the subjects shall be so vivified and so presented that a necessary absence shall be a day of pleasure lost. Many a boy has doubtless been made a worthless if not a dangerous member of society by the irksomeness of his school-days.

It is not alone by enforced restraint that these little bundles of activities are to be brought into relations of harmony and usefulness. Not more eager for what is new were Paul's hearers on Mars Hill than they. Of quick discernment, of keen insight, and small respect for sham and pretense, they have not learned, as we, by long pupilage, to sit contented with teachings they do not understand, or to keep step to music not in unison with their young heart-beats.

Along the paths of learning, as well as in the world's highway, they do not follow kindly the straight and beaten track, but soon pull away from the hand that leads them, now picking berries by the road-side, now in the field with hat in hand, in full chase of some bright butterfly, and again bending down to paddle in the pebbly brook; and he is the wiser guide who, yielding somewhat to their wild humors, brings them in at the end, weary, it may be, but with many a little lesson learned and childish treasure garnered.

Kindly and wisely to gather up these wild and changing humors, and, without subduing the spirit or abating the ardor, to unite them in one grand earnest purpose of life, is not the work of a novice or a trained dullard.

Too often, I fear, we send forth even our best pupils with no aim beyond the diploma, no ambition but for the high mark, who, when the pressure of the class-room is lifted, float aimlessly out of the sparkling current of progress, like the bits of drift-wood that we see on the

scum-covered pool below the busy mill of our New England streams.

We, too, as teachers, need to keep ourselves in line and sympathy with the world's advance, and not, like Hamlet, with the ghost of some dead past forever rising before us, permit it to chill our warm impulse, and hold us back from all worldly endeavor and achievement.

We, too, need to join our strength and share our counsels with those of our own calling. We need to preserve so much of youth in our hearts as to find beauty and music in the floating butterfly and the babbling brook of boyhood.

There are leaders and teachers among us, whose spoken or written thought we may not ignore. There is, too, the poetry, the science, the philosophy, the art, the history, the romance of our own and other days around us that we may not neglect. And it may well be matter of astonishment how few are the fruits and flowers, from any of these sources, that may not be put to use in our daily work, in suggestion, in striking example, in apt illustration, in encouragement, in instruction.

And some such allurement is ofttimes required to draw us out of ourselves, to relieve that depression and weariness, that sinking of heart, that sometimes come on us, when the day's work is over, and we feel exhausted of our electric force by five hours' contact with threescore bristling fragments of humanity.

When all else fails, and "this whole round world seems flat, stale, and unprofitable," as a sure and safe resource there is nothing for health, strength, and recreation, like a good, reliable hobby. Though it be nothing rarer or more costly than moth-hunting, the jingle or jangle of rhymes, or even reformed spelling, they are, some of them, as I well know, of boundless possibilities.

But at your daily mount of your hobby-horse, take not your way down the crowded street, and through the thronging mart, nor over the choice flower-beds and fragrant exotics of your friends; but rather turn aside into the quiet lane, or the unfrequented country road, or, still better, off for a free stretch over the wide, open prairie, where, with tossing arms and expanding chest, you can shout forth your happiness, till with loud-answering echo, the solitary places shall be made glad with your presence.

Still onward till your beast and yourself are weary, and returning, see that he is well groomed and stalled, and in due time properly fed, in preparation for another day, and it may be the coming age will raise to you and it a monument.

We conclude, then, that leaving to the philosopher the abstruse questions of thought, and without trenching upon the beliefs or prejudices of any respectable portion of society, we have in our public schools the most certain and most efficient agencies for the moral culture of the young; the habit of quiet order, the diligent industry, the systematic method, and above all, or rather the pledge and security for all, the generous, the disciplined, the cultured, the ever-progressive teacher, one whom we would gladly receive into our homes as companions, and as guides and guardians of our children.

In the mutual rights and duties of the family and social relations, the rights of the child, we believe, are paramount. If the parent or the State has a claim upon the child for devotion and service, much more has the child, as the involuntary partner, a moral right to be educated for these relations. And with the truer aims and better methods of to-day, may we not fairly hope for an ever-increasing recognition and fuller satisfaction of this, his supreme right?

II.

THE CHARACTER OF THE TEACHER.

It is not so long ago but you may almost count the years on the fingers of one hand since society was suddenly startled from its sense of serenity, as by thunder from a clear sky.

A great man who had spent his life in giving instruction had died, and upon reading his will it was found that he had truthfully signed himself, "Louis Agassiz, Teacher."

The provisions of the will were too important to have it set aside on the ground of insanity, and therefore the wide republic was called upon to contribute for a memorial to the self-forgetfulness of the man who, in the exercise of a sound mind, could calmly write himself "Teacher."

And this is not a solitary expression of a large public sentiment. In all English literature down to one of the last magazine novels of the present editor of "The Atlantic," the schoolmaster has been regarded as a legitimate object of ridicule.

"Tom Brown at Rugby" alone in literature has shown that the schoolmaster may be a man, noble, scholarly, humane, gentle, in the best sense of the word; and that the school-boy, instead of being his natural enemy and providential tormentor, may become his loving disciple and most devoted friend.

We need not be careful to deny that there have been, and still are, some sufficient reasons for these abounding views, if from their caricatures, satires, and flippant pleasantries we may be led to discover the weak points in our character and work, and to learn how to come nearer

that high ideal which we cherish and to which, with greater or less earnestness, we all aspire—how we may slough off the old follies and foibles which have gathered around the names of schoolmaster and pedagogue and stand among the intelligent and refined with the honor and esteem which should clothe the name of teacher. For what business or profession calls for a deeper insight, wiser methods, or more delicate and skillful treatment, or is more important to society, than that of quickening the intellect and developing and molding the character of those who, as men and women, are so soon to control all our interests? It may be true that all these little ones have their natural and hereditary traits, which in a deeper sense form their characters, and which may not be changed or obliterated; but the possible outcomes of these, as the result of the teacher's influence, may show a difference as wide as the universe.

And could the practical, earnest men and women accurately measure the results—could we take account of stock, and compute percentages of profit and loss in mind and morals, as we can in hardware and dry-goods and groceries—our successes or failures would meet with other return than taunt and gibe, and the study of the columns of statistics in our reports would not end with the proof-reader.

This school-keeping of ours is not a makeshift, a catch-penny device, a means for tiding over an unforeseen bar in our business career, a ready resort from the tedium of housekeeping, a flirtation with small literature, a free fountain by the wayside, where the tired traveler may slake his thirst and pass on, but a high calling, where, if anywhere, are required intellectual attainments, an active intelligence, tact, special training, and that well-balanced self-poise which we sometimes call manhood and womanhood.

Nowhere is the waif and estray of fortune and of life so out of place as in the school-room, and nowhere as in the school may one contribute to the welfare of his kind, and see the result of cheerful, hearty, unwearied well-doing; and nowhere is there greater need of a healthful, harmonious, and ever-widening growth in mind and character.

It is said that we are so unfortunate as not to be brought in contact with those of our own age, our equals or superiors in maturity of thought and in acquirements, from association with whom we might strengthen our reason and judgment, sharpen our wit, and enlarge our stock of information, but must bring ourselves down to the comprehension of the immature and the ignorant.

Unlike those in other professions, too, who may push their inquiries into the higher and broader fields of thought and fancy, or penetrate those deeps where fathom-line has never reached, we are to teach merely those simple elements and truths which are assumed to be the common property of all, which we ourselves may have taught a hundred times, till the very wheels of thought have become mired and clogged in the little ruts themselves have made.

Nor does our school life take hold upon the active and ever-multiplying industries of the day, which fill the coffers of the rich, or which surround with comforts and luxuries, or crown with office and honor the self-seeking and the ambitious.

And from the very nature and conditions of our work we may not wisely engage in the partisan and sectarian strifes and discussions which are the especial birthright of a people who are but even now beginning to realize the full power of free thought and free speech, by which their destiny is to be wrought out.

We are also each but a member of a great system, subject to its laws, with no opportunity, like the merchant, the banker, and the railroad magnate, by wiser forethought, larger enterprise, and broader combinations, to reap that richer harvest to ourselves of profit and power which comes of well-directed, successful effort.

We may not so often hear our deeds heralded to the public ear in noisy huzzas; but the fault is ours if in the hearts of the wise and good the name of teacher is not held in honor.

There is a way of teaching, and sometimes by earnest teachers, too, that is narrowing and belittling, and an educational literature that is its most faithful ally.

The pictures of a Goldsmith and a Scott, of an Irving and a Dickens, present features of a type of schoolmasters in which we can detect the lineaments of a species not yet wholly extinct; but let us hope they may be found in the near future only by the fossil-hunter in the dense jungles of ignorance which the light of the age has not pierced, or imbedded in the quagmires of superstition which the ingenuity of science has not spanned.

Be it that we have to do with children and youth, with those whose hungry hearts are not yet sated, nor their restless feet grown weary; whose lisping lips and tripping tongues have not become shaped to the hard phrase of an all-grasping greed, or familiar with the bewildering jargon of boards of trade; on whose sweet senses pure pleasures have not palled, nor the fair fruits of folly yielded their full bitterness; and to whom dull drudgery has not come in the attractive guise of that divinity of labor through whom we can conquer all things; that their sacred instincts have not been so insulted and trampled upon by stupidity and prejudice as to refuse longer to act as guides to what their nature

craves for its sustenance and development; that the spirit has not so lost its magnetic sensitiveness by long contact with dull or dead natures as not to be attracted by kindness, trust, and confidence, and repelled by harshness, sneers, and ridicule; that, in short, the child is fresh, active, ardent, restless, and impulsive, in the midst of a world to him as new, as curious, as attractive, as unknown as himself, where he must conquer or fail for himself.

This human child in its complexity and its delicacy, in its weakness and its possibilities, is the real, unsolved problem of our schools, and the man or woman fitted by nature, education, thought, and experience to discern the true conditions and rightly apply the means for its solution, their greatest need.

Before the days of Franklin the lightning was known only as the dangerous attendant of the thunder-storm, coming to frighten the ignorant, and fill the heart of the wise man with awe. But when he found it to be no supernatural imp, but the familar of his laboratory, he stripped it of its direst terrors, showing how it might be turned aside and its wrath averted. Then came the lightning-rod man, to most persons an object of dread only less than that of the original lightning. A wiser generation has learned that by proper guidance electricity may become one of our most efficient and tractable agents in diffusing and transmitting light and intelligence.

So the inextinguishable boyishness of the boy, the terror of the schoolma'am and the wonder of the pedagogue, which in the olden time was seen but as an element of turbulence and confusion, to be shunned by the order-loving and the peaceful, a later day learned to avoid by turning it from the school-room to the street, possibly relieving the school but increasing the real evil.

A praiseworthy motive, no doubt, dictated this course, to avoid the mental and moral pyæmia sure to result if the evil should be taken up and spread through the system; but a too long and continuous drain of even "laudable pus" weakens and ruins at the last.

It but remains for those who control our schools, it remains for us, as teachers, to turn this old-time bane into a blessing. We have to learn, not how to check those restless feet, but how to direct them gracefully into the right paths; not how to stifle the craving of those eager hearts, but to supply the nutriment, which they with joy can receive and assimilate; we must labor not to hush and still those babbling tongues, but to find the words of truth and wisdom, which they may understandingly pronounce; not to dull the sharp sense, that so often leads away from our wishes and regulations, but to impart a zest to our teachings, so sweetly to mingle toil and play, that each shall be in its turn a delight; not to deaden or destroy the instinctive tendencies of his expanding being, but kindly and wisely to bring them into a willing subjection to a higher reason, guided by a more enlightened understanding; to remove the tedium of heartless toil, by a more thorough study of the child nature; by noting, with as keen an eye as the bee-hunter's, what course his instincts would take, and placing before him in each stage of his course the subjects and problems of nature, life, and art, with which his outreaching spirit may successfully and lovingly grapple.

Can the ambitious student of nature find enough to satisfy the longings of his soul in bending over a butterfly or a beetle, and the philologist seek his immortality of fame in devotion to the dative case, and are we degraded by our endeavors to understand this crowning expression of creative power?

There is an essential truth in the spirit of the remark attributed to Mr. Garfield, when a member of Congress. When some alumni and friends of Williams College were discussing its needs in the way of books and apparatus, and turned to him for his opinion, he is said to have replied, "Give me a log-cabin in the center of the State, having but one room, containing a rough bench, with Dr. Hopkins on one end and me on the other, and there is a college for me." And well might it be. A large-minded, a great-hearted, a fully-equipped, and well-trained man, in wise and intimate converse with an intelligent and revering pupil, guiding yet following his earnest but often halting efforts to clear up the manifold mysteries of mind and matter around him, and the greatest of all, the extent and the powers of his own mental and moral being, the teacher too great, too earnest to be dwarfed or hindered—himself, perhaps, the greater learner of the two.

A narrow basis of character or purpose must he have who fears to stoop to the comprehension of his little learners, who rather dare not rise toward the height of his profession.

He whose growth ceases with his graduation from school or college, whose certificate to teach crowns the last effort of an exhausted spirit, may suffer by suffering the little children to come too near, or to draw too closely about him, for the wisest man will often find himself at fault in answering their legitimate inquiries, and often feels a momentary impulse to meet the difficulty by the time-honored method of putting that child to bed.

There can be no more dangerous heresy for our schools than the sentiment which would depreciate the scholarly attainments and character of our teachers.

Scholarship alone does not of necessity imply the ability to teach, but this ability is quite as likely to be

the companion of learning as of ignorance, and experience shows that if accurate scholarship and correct speech be wanting, the aptness is quite as apt to teach error as truth.

The days of the A-B-C-darians, and the three R's—ah ! ah ! and alas !—have happily gone by, and hard after them are following those to whom the ability to trace with index-finger, word by word, and line by line, the pupil's progress down the page of the text-book, was enough.

The eager applicant for a position advancing through the room with the exclamation : "Have you did it yet ? I want it awful," probably had that qualification ; and the candidate for a place as principal of one of our great schools, with its score of teachers, and its ten or twelve hundred pupils, would hardly have hazarded "Cardinal Wolsey and John of Gaunt" as "leading statesmen of George III's reign," with the text-book before his eyes.

We fear such teachers, even when bringing their apt gifts.

That the teacher should be familiar with the meager contents of the text-book goes without the saying, but this is but a small and comparatively insignificant part of his accomplishments, and the memorizing of the brief pages but one of the several results to be aimed at for the pupil's benefit. The clear conception, the power of thought, of comparison and judgment, and the easy, concise, correct expression, are distinct objects, each fully as important as the facts themselves.

No grade so small but some definite and ready knowledge of the vegetable and animal life about us is an essential part of the teacher's outfit.

Plain and simple illustration of the cause of day and night, the summer's heat, the winter's cold, the dew, the rain, the frosts and snows, will find a welcome place in

the school-room, without infringing upon the high-school course, and sometimes without leaving the skill of the high-school graduate in physics and astronomy untasked.

That grasp of mathematics which, outside the province of the lightning calculator, comprehends something of the logic of numbers and their application, to see what we have, and what we want, and the direct road to our destination, needs to be nerved by a stronger diet of algebra and geometry than the averages of our examinations would often indicate.

To what useful purpose do our pupils learn from the book the names of the ten important towns of Massachusetts, without knowing so much as whether they are something to be laid away in safes, or strung up to dry like the oldwives' apples; or to learn that Minnesota produces wheat, Kentucky tobacco, and Louisiana sugar, still ignorant whether they are picked like apples from trees, or dug from the ground like potatoes; or why spend much time or thought at all on the what or the where of the Angora cat?

And should not he who directs the education of the child have some acquaintance with the laws of mental growth and development? I mean, not the deep ponderings and abstruse reasonings of the metaphysician, and the recluse, but those accepted principles of mental action which may guide to the right mode and order of presenting the different subjects—something of the material upon which he works, and the tools to be employed.

There are more fruitful themes for our primary pupils than nice classifications and technical definitions. What not to teach is often as important a problem as how to teach. Why confuse our children with the nature and kinds of sentences before they have them at command?

Classification becomes useful when the multiplicity of objects becomes perplexing and burdensome.

Double entry is not of advantage in running a peanut-stand.

Hardly would two grammarians define a sentence alike; and should two, perchance, be found to agree, a third would doubtless start up in astonishment and eager protest.

We would not wish our small graders to know what a sentence is, or that there are such troublesome things in existence.

And worst of all is this attempt to bring down the higher and more difficult studies of riper years within the grasp of the infant mind by the use of those twaddling terms which it will soon be the hardest task to unlearn. What a burlesque of education to tell a child, as yet unable to read readily, to write a telling sentence about a cat! A telling sentence, truly, but telling most of the absurdity of the method.

Things come before names, use before theories, speaking before writing, the whole before its parts, words before letters.

Think of the time spent on the interjection oh! which seems to have a sort of monopoly of primers and first readers, though rarely found elsewhere, or used save by young girls and teachers. Intelligence is not largely interjectional.

What marvels of uselessness we can make of ourselves with the aid of the book-makers! I can now recall, as but of yesterday, and doubt not my freed spirit will find encysted somewhere in its incorporeal anatomy, the old definition of "punctuation, which is the art of dividing a written composition into sentences or parts of sentences by points or stops, to mark the different pauses which the

sense requires," which, for any good resulting therefrom, might fitly have been subscribed, "Truly yours, Theophilus Thistle, the thistle-sifter." These things all have their uses, and in their due time and order pass grandly into our curriculum through the wide doors of reason and enlightenment, instead of toddling in by the back door and nursery.

And is not the wise study of the times and methods of teaching the several topics as high a pursuit as measuring off tape or weighing sugar, or packing a caucus? And is not the pursuit as much the part and the promoter of wisdom, as how to secure a seat or a vote in council or Legislature? And does not the worthy teacher need a broader and deeper reading of books and character than is found in our prescribed lists? And may not the hundredth repetition of the same lesson be better directed, more simply and plainly presented, and more judiciously and pleasingly illustrated than any of the preceding? And is not she well deserving who devotes some of the evening and, it may be, the morning hours to those studies which shall enliven and enrich the labor of the class-room?

I remember lately to have read some complaint that we teach so much that is not needed in the counting-room; surely it is devoutly to be hoped. There are, to my mind, few sadder pictures than that of a thinking, reasoning being shut in, from youth to hoary age, to the requirements of the counting-room:

> . . . from the cheerful ways of men
> Cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair
> Presented with a universal blank
> Of Nature's works, to him expunged and 'rased.

The condition of the old men, solemnly nursing their hoe-handles on the city street, seems Elysian in comparison.

Of such a one, perhaps, Wordsworth wrote:

> The multiplication table was his creed
> His paternoster and his decalogue;
> For in a close and dusty counting-house
> He had so smoke-dried and seared and shriveled up
> His heart, that when the dirt shall now
> Be shoveled on him, 'twill still be dust to dust.

But most of all do we need to get rid of the paltriness, the littleness, the petty tyranny, the false and easily offended dignity that still lurk and linger in the dusty corners of our system. We desire that the mention of school and teacher should suggest something other than strap and rattan and ruler; that some other question should be found to ask our returning pupils at nightfall than "How many times have you been pinched or beaten to-day?" We want our teachers—men and women—too big, too manly, too womanly to be able to be insulted by any child intrusted to his or her care—too much in sympathy with the child-nature to see a design in every error, a covert crime in every unmeaning glance; and we want our pupils so confident of the good-will and calm, just discrimination of the teacher as to honestly and frankly come and report any accidental wrong-doing without fear or dread.

I wish I had the gift of speech that would enable me to express my thought, to give clear voice to the feeling that comes over me in the still, small hours, when thought can range unhindered by the cares and annoyances of the outer world.

Think of yourselves at the call and beck of the parent who could take his little boy or girl up to the public whipping-post to be flogged by a hired baster, and him or her to be found in the free school, and there intrusted with the tenderest and most delicate interests of life!

Believe me, my fellow-teachers, our schools will be mentioned with scorn and our names spoken with contempt till we cast aside this relic of a by-gone age, and cease to be the sole representatives of a debased and degrading barbarism.

I was glad at our last school anniversary to be able to congratulate teachers and pupils that there was one school-building in this city where, for a quarter of a century, the work of instruction had gone on, like the building of Solomon's temple, with never the sound of blows within its walls.

A recent number of the "Journal of Education" cites one of those so considered extreme cases, where the writer would "like the privilege of resorting to physical suasion." "A rough, hulking fellow," it goes on to say, "down on Cape Cod, in answer to a mild reproof from his teacher, a nice, lady-like girl, said, 'I'd punch yer head for ye, if ye warn't a woman.'" And he, of course, should be whanged and pounded? We would show him, then, that our self-respect, aided by a greater maturity of thought and judgment, could not restrain us from doing the self-same act from which he had been withheld by respect for another.

If he had been sent to me, I would rather have said, in effect: "My young friend, I am glad to learn that you stand one of the truest tests of manliness. No man is to be despaired of so long as he preserves a true respect for woman. But that is not the way to speak to a lady. She isn't a fish-woman. If I were you, when I found an opportunity, I would tell her that, in my anger, I had done what I was ashamed of when I thought of it—not unless you want to; but I fancy you'd feel yourself twice the man after it. Come and see me again within a day or two."

One of our most experienced and successful teachers asked me, not long since, if I remembered such and such a one, who used to be in school. I was forced to admit very distinct recollections of them.

"But we have had no such cases," said he, "of late years; and, do you know," he continued, with more than his wonted tenderness—"do you know that I often think I should have had no trouble with them if I had known anything?" in which opinion I was forced also to acquiesce.

The work of education is to enkindle and instruct, not merely to quench and repress; yet how confidently, in answer to my some time suggestion that such a teacher is not specially successful, comes the quick reply, "I do not know why not—I keep them still!" So, haply, would sleep or death, forsooth, for even ghosts tread softly and speak low; but, as in the young groves and bright meadows of spring-time, so in the school; we love the gentle murmur and rustle of "the green things growing."

Do not misunderstand me. I believe in the advantage—the necessity—of quiet order as thoroughly as any one; but when the whole force of the teacher is expended in the perpetual endeavor to hush and suppress the undirected activities of the school-room, I feel that she has not been "put where she can do the most good."

It may not indicate any lack of intelligence that one is not successful in school, more than the inability to sing or play the violin would do so. There is many and many "a nice girl," on and off of Cape Cod, who can not wisely keep a school of hulking boys; but there are enough who can.

It has been a much-mooted question, of late, with writers and speakers on education, "How shall we obtain good teachers for our schools?" It does not seem

to me a difficult conundrum. It is much like Horace Greeley's "way to resume." If we do not have good teachers in our schools, it is simply because—no, *not* because we do not want them, but because we do not employ them; consciously or unconsciously we allow other motives to influence us.

How it may be in the smaller towns I do not know, but, in the larger ones, I believe we can have just as good teachers as we choose. The bright men, the intelligent men, the able, the earnest men do not, by any means, all go into the professions and trade of choice. Even with the present inadequate pay, there are good teachers enough—lovers of the work—to fill our positions.

But to throw off some of the old traditions, or rather the old associations, which still cling to our names and to our work, is a task in which the best lover of them all will find a field for his most earnest endeavor.

There have been, as it seems to me, two grand impulses given to education in this country.

The first came from the life and labors of Horace Mann, whose intense enthusiasm and burning words stirred the heart of New England, as had never been done before, to the importance of universal education, the need of more systematic methods, and the necessity for educated and carefully trained teachers.

I have tried to recall an extract from a Fourth-of-July oration of his before the authorities of Boston, which I learned when a pupil in school, though I have not seen it since:

"For, in the name of the living God," he says, "it must be proclaimed that superstition shall be the religion, that licentiousness shall be the liberty, and that anarchy shall be the law of that people which neglects the education of its children."

The second grand impulse, wholly unlike the first, but no less valuable in its place, came, I think, from the reading of "Tom Brown at Rugby."

It was said by one of Dr. Arnold's friends that, if he should be elected head-master at Rugby, he would change the face of education in England.

However that may have been, his influence, through "Tom Brown," if it has not changed the face, has gone far to work out a change of heart in the better schools of these Northern States.

We may have learned elsewhere of the life and work of Arnold—his character, his methods, his reforms. But "Tom Brown," passing into the hands of young and old, gave an insight into the real spirit and power of the man, as seen and interpreted by the author, with a delicacy of sentiment and a nobleness of feeling which most of us, I fear, would not, unaided, have seen so clearly in the doctor himself.

This is one of the few cases, we suspect, in which the translation does full justice to the original.

This spirit of manliness, so largely pervading our better schools, had its origin, we think, in a good degree in "Tom Brown at Rugby," with which many of our own citizens are, doubtless, more familiar than with our schools in Chicago. And if some of those who, from time to time, call loudly for reform, were as well acquainted with the inner life of some of our schools as with that of the great schools of England, they would find that we have not only "outgrown our own bragging," but have left some of their ideal reforms a whole decade behind us.

It is, then, no new principles that we are urging. The deep conviction, the change of heart, have already begun. We should now strive for that inner growth which shall find expression in a fuller, completer life.

The coming generation, that is to make or unmake our city, our State, and our country, is already filling the air with its prattle, its laughter, its cries.

Some of them even now, through neglect, are stumbling and falling in the ways of ignorance and crime; some straying, uncared for, into the haunts of vice and misery; the larger and better portion, let us hope, with fresh hearts and bright faces, timidly, gleefully, hopefully advancing, singly and in groups, to the school-house.

Society is waiting, calling—earnestly, anxiously—for men and women of broader culture and nobler nature—men and women of quick intelligence, of enlightened understanding, of large heart and generous impulse, to take these little ones by the hand and lead them into the pleasant ways of wisdom, virtue, usefulness, and happiness.

It remains to be seen how many of us will step forward in sympathy with this call of the age, with a ready, a hearty "Ay, ay, sirs!"

III.

THE PLACE OF MEMORY IN SCHOOL INSTRUCTION.

WHILE the rebel angels were waiting, in the outer abyss, the return of their great leader from his "still hunt" for the whereabout of this new world, Milton represents them as "reasoning high of Providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate, fixed fate, free-will, foreknowledge absolute"—a discussion not yet ended, nor has it been restricted to this rebel crew. None so attractive.

No supposed possession or attribute has seemed so

desirable, or raised man so near the divine, in the estimation of his fellows, as this foreknowledge, this power to discern the future. It has invested the seer, the prophet, and the soothsayer with a reverence which still casts its mysterious shadow over the otherwise transparent frauds of the modern fortune-teller, and even the prognostics of a Venner.

Face to face with the unknown, with all the forces of nature and life surging around us, in our seeming helplessness and ignorance, we are at all times tempted to cry, "Oh, that I only knew!" Whether the acquisition would be beneficial or not, or even possible, by the endowment of some new sense, so attractive is the thought that, in comparison, we are apt to underestimate or forget the importance of that hardly less valuable power of looking back at what has been—that power through which the whole past of nature and of man is spread before us like a map, with his deeds of glory and of shame; the revolution of worlds and of thought; the rise and fall of nations, as of tides; through which we can deduce the laws by which continents are built up, and suns and planets hung forth as lamps; the laws of growth and decay, of failure and success, of happiness and woe; enabling us not only to recreate the lost past, but with one hand to put aside the veil, and with apocalyptic vision descry the future, too, so that we seem no longer walking as into the night, but make even the darkness light before our steps, and direct our course among the mysteries of life as confidently and unerringly as ever in boyhood through our own father's house.

How all these fading phases of life are copied, and written down, and preserved; where they are stored for our use, and by what secret process of will or association they are made to come forth at our bidding, we may well

leave to what by a sweet euphemism is called philosophy, to which distance and obscurity the great enchantment lend.

Enough for our present purpose to know that the past by some hidden power is made ours; that the events of our lives are thus photographed; our thoughts and feelings recorded, as in sympathetic ink, and the requirements of to-day laid away and guarded, as by some faithful servitor, to be handed forth at our call and desire; that thus alone are reason and intelligence made possible, and life worth the living. And to us, as teachers, it becomes a matter of the first importance to understand the true relation of the memory to the other powers, that we may not undervalue it, as the great storehouse of the mind, and by neglect allow our pupils to become little better than mental tramps, calculating without capital, and restless with no resources; or, by our overestimate or misapprehension, make of them miserly paupers, hugging their intellectual hoards to their hungry hearts, wonders in dreary details and dates and dry statistics, but worthless for any productive work, or for any service to society.

It is this memory by which the child in the first waking of its intelligence learns to discern the mother's face, and by associating with it the little joys and pleasures which love and sympathy have been able to bestow, ere long to distinguish the sound, the spoken name by which the ever-present heeder of its wants is known, till the word mother, the synonym of all kindness and unselfish faithfulness and unexacting love, becomes the dearest, the tenderest, the truest, and most sacred word in all literature.

It is this by which he is at length enabled correctly to frame his own mysterious babblings, so sweet and so plain to the mother's ever-attentive ear; this by which

those first inarticulate incoherencies are molded into the sustained melody and eloquence of a Milton or a Pitt.

It is this, too, by which he becomes familiar with the little world of his nursery, and learns to discriminate between the objects around him, and—by recalling his previous ineffectual grasps—to know that the moon is beyond his reach; to judge of distance by sight and sound; to compass his first exultant stumble from the chair to his mother's outstretched hand, and convert it into the stride of a Hercules, or the bound of an Apollo; which, in short, saves us all from a perpetual babyhood of ignorance and imbecility, forever beginning and never advancing; gathering the sweet and sparkling drops of life into the bottomless bucket of forgetfulness, from which no draughts can ever be drained of strength or hope.

Yet, not alone does memory give power or wisdom; it accumulates material, but never selects or constructs; it heaps up rubbish as readily as it fills treasures; it records errors and sorrows as well as successes and joys, but of itself teaches neither how to avoid the one nor to secure and increase the other.

And in the various branches of our school-work, what are the things to be memorized; under what conditions, and by what means the memory may best secure the desired results, and how its resources may be most wisely and securely invested, and by what guardianship made most available for the future life and progress of their pupils, may well command the frequent and earnest thought of every teacher.

The average child of six years already upon entering school has, in greater or less completeness, his little vocabulary, sufficient for the needs of his daily life. He has seen the dog, the tree, the bird, has heard and remembered the sounds which we call names, has associated

with them the utterances, which we designate by "barks" and "grows" and "sings," and has laid them one by one away within easy reach in his memory.

He has noted the motion of the lip when others have pronounced the words, and one by one by many an effort has himself mastered the wondrous art, which he has practiced with ever-new delight, till now, almost without a conscious effort, as if by intuition, the words talk themselves. To him a word is a word, a simple utterance, is what he says, which he has never analyzed, never thought about, and he knows no more why this or that sound stands for this or that thing, or act, than—we ourselves.

How he has loved to live and learn! Like the lambs in their pastures, life has been to him a joy. He has talked and laughed and run and climbed, winning ever some new word, some wisdom, some power, and always some new happiness; and now, in the glad pride of his little heart, he has come to school. He is a scholar; he is going to learn to read.

Those objects, those acts, and those feelings, for which he has learned the sounds, he is now to see represented by marks, by printed, written characters. The primer, the volume, the wisdom, the poetry, the eloquence of the ages are to be opened and revealed to him, and why should he not be proud and glad?

His first twenty, or forty, or two hundred words are to be memorized, learned as simple words, mere arbitrary characters for simple sounds, as wholes and not yet in their parts, one or two to-day, and the others to-morrow and the next day; he is to learn to know them, to make them, and so familiarly, by seeing, by speaking, and by writing, that the character shall always suggest the sound, the sound the character, all unconsciously, as he has already associated the sound and the object or act.

A different thing, as he soon finds, from chasing butterflies and making mud-pies, is this filling his slate with words, only to erase them and fill it again—that modern refinement and combination of pillory and thumb-screw.

The lively, eager attention, the first requisite and condition of memorizing, soon gives place to dull and painful listlessness, if not to revolt and lawlessness, since now the second condition of memory, frequent repetition, has been carried to a nauseating satiety.

Now must the ingenuity, the art, the power of the teacher, like the voice of the Master to the sinking Peter, appear or he perishes. Instead of the frequent repetition, the word must be wrought into sentences alive with a new meaning. The object must be at hand, the picture presented, the perception called into exercise, the little story told and repeated, the interest awakened.

As we know of matter only through force, and of force only through matter, so in these early days of school life must the thing and the word become forever associated by constant practice. Dull repetition must give place to pleasing variety; the words of yesterday wrought into the lessons of to-day and to-morrow; the new words of to-day pointed out, written, talked about before commencing the lesson, or as an introduction. Thus, instead of being a stumbling-block in the path of his reading, now will the new word glisten like a new coin among its dingy companions, and its easy mastery on the new page fill him with the pride, the happiness of a conqueror.

But the storing of the memory with accumulations of forms and facts is of little use, unless they can be at once and with ease reproduced and wrought into new creations, with different effects and for other purposes. The pupil with his learning must be always using his acquisitions. He must be led to talk and talk correctly. Very early in

his school life does he form those habits that never leave him, even by prayer and fasting. Those little errors that we learned in childhood, even now after beating them down for a score or two of years, in some careless moment will start up as fresh and strong as if they had never known defeat.

Here in the early grade is determined whether in his utterance he shall be clear, open, distinct, articulate, correct, or go through grammar and high school, perchance through college and university, with hang-dog air and incoherent mutterings.

Here, by question and answer, by recital and story, before he can yet busy himself with the printed or written page, he should become familiar with the common forms of speech—*man, men, children, child, am, is, are, a, an*—not by rule or definition, but by use in all the variety of their combinations. These are for permanent use; forms that are always used, and by all, and their correct use is all memory and habit—habit so strong and confirmed that the effort escapes detection. It should be made ere long so thoroughly a part of himself that he would no more think of saying "we is," "I done it," "he has went," "them books," than of putting his food into his ears.

But no definition; nothing of "sentence, asking sentence, telling sentence"; no "action words, naming words, relation words"; no rules. It should yet be all use. He who talks by rule never talks well. With true culture words come as the winds come, and we hear the sound thereof.

Memory quickened by association with some object or purpose, enlivened by variety and novelty, made reproductive by new applications requiring ingenuity and skill on the pupil's part, is the chief reliance and hope of the lower grades.

This is the receptive period, when the underlying material for future upbuilding is to be secured. It is the curious, the observing period, when all is still fresh and new, when the child's thought is ever on the wing from flower to flower, from sweet to sweet—ever bearing, too, like the bee from blossom to blossom, the fertilizing dust that shall make them all hereafter richer of flower and fruit; the period, too, when all objects quickly pall upon the sense.

The fixity of thought, the close observation and comparison, the nice analysis, the weighing and balancing of reasons and probabilities, which are the delight of the trained intellect, play a small part in his young life. His purposes are as fleeting as his laughter or his tears; there is no place in his nature for mere routine.

The memorized rules and definitions have to him no meaning, and to force them upon him is but to send him blindfold into a field of rich and rare products, whose pathways he has not yet learned, and whose beauties he has not yet seen; or to lead him painfully and sadly by the hand, when with the bandage removed—

> The stream, the wood, the earth, the skies,
> Would be to him an opening paradise.

As in a gallery of pictured landscapes there is in each the mead, the hill, the tree, the stream, with a touch of human or animal life, but always in different combination, with varied relations, so should the monotony of dull repetition on the printed page be relieved.

The words that are recited and written to-day should be woven and wreathed into other figures and expressions to-morrow; and thus repetition, one of the most efficient means for memory's aid, invested with all the charm of novelty.

Twenty minutes a day with young pupils will often

have a double value if ten be given to the forenoon and ten to the afternoon.

To pronounce or spell a word twice or twenty times in immediate succession, if correctly done at the first trial, may possibly make a deeper impression, but will have little effect in giving it a lasting hold.

And when a page is read with ease, and perhaps repeated without the book, though it may be of some use in teaching expression or as a subject for conversation, yet as a reading-lesson it has served its purpose, and should give place to something else. Its further use is rather to stifle thought, and make of our thinking pupils little else than prating parrots.

Even upon the most enduring tablets the names and inscriptions become moss-covered and illegible, unless renewed at times by the mallet and chisel of some Old Mortality, and the lessons of our early school life, without an occasional recall, fade and escape us before the high-school examination; and, with a return in each grade to some preceding principles of the earlier grades, some new relation or application can be shown for which the pupil was not at first prepared. It is a frequent and sad mistake to suppose that a subject must be completed at the first consideration of it.

With the lower grades, too, as well as with the higher, an escape from monotony and a livelier interest may be secured by the magnetic attrition and generous rivalry of different minds. Not only in the saving of time and the multiplying of the teacher's efficiency, but in the quality of the work, a class of ten or twenty is far better than one or two. The wise teacher will seek, of course, to discern and regard the peculiarities of the individual pupils, but individual instruction without the class is almost of necessity inferior instruction.

The wealthy may employ the private tutor in the home, but at the sacrifice of the full-rounded training that results from the contact of mind with mind. The suggestions of another's reading or recitation, the quickening of the mind, the alertness of thought in detecting errors, the skill and power of expression in making proper corrections, these are often quite as valuable as the teachings of the book, and poorly does the teacher appreciate the appliances of her art who allows the pupil after his own recitation to turn to some other branch while his fellows are reciting.

Often a class of sixty even, in some kinds of work, derive as much benefit as if each were the solitary object of the teacher's care. The very errors of his fellows will sometimes fix the correct principle in the memory, as his own study had failed to do.

On some sample pages of a revised edition of "Brown's Grammar," just received, I find: "The bird; The bird sings; The bird on the tree." "Now," he says, "we are prepared for a definition of language."

For the advanced student, able to discuss intelligently the fitness of the definition, yes. For the young pupil, why? It teaches him nothing. He knows what language is as well as Brown. It is what he says; is talk. No definition can enable him to know any better. For the hair-splitter it may be a good test of his acuteness and ingenuity. "Language," says Brown, "is the expression of our thoughts." What are thought and expression? What relation is expressed by *of?* What if I express not my thought, but yours? What if I read or talk, as we say, without expression? Is it language? Does the learner know more than before? You have all heard of Plato's man.

The meanings of these new words are to be learned

first by explanation, by employing them in various ways, but not by definition alone. No one becomes an elegant writer or speaker, or gets the nicer shades of meaning, by dictionary only. This is to be gained by thoughtful and varied reading of good authors, and by use and practice. But for the pupil in the primary grades let him get the correct idea, the thought, but not in set form of words. Let him learn no rules, no definitions, till he can make his own. Then he can memorize the best form understandingly. That only is to be learned by rote that is unchangeable. Extracts of poetry, and sometimes of prose, those crystals of thought that must remain, as pure, as durable as the diamond, may well be memorized and made familiar.

When the pupil has become so well acquainted with most of the common words and their meanings that he can detect them at a half-glance, as he can his dog, his book, or his brother, and those ever-recurring forms, as *a*, *the*, *of*, *to*, *for*, and *but*, have almost ceased to seem as separate words; when his thought can run forward like an advanced guard ahead of his utterances, to remove all hindrances from his way, the memory is but just prepared to gather the richer treasures strewed along the route of his conquering march; to grasp the thoughts that have been hidden within those mastered sentences, and to distinguish the gem from the glittering gaud.

Then may he take the thought from its old setting, and fit it to other uses; from the recorded deed detect the character; from the plan, the secret purpose.

We sometimes blame our children for reading books for the story, and yet, if the story be worth the while, is it not a high, a useful art? In the multitude of things to read, is it not a worthy aim to learn to gather and store up the best; to be able to give the sub-

stance of a page from a single reading, a close but rapid survey?

And in numbers, too, it would seem that in the earlier grades much of it is rather a matter of memory than of mathematics.

The child of a year knows that he has more thumbs than mouths; and at three, that a whole apple is more than a half.

One, two, three, four, might just as well have been, *zig, zag, pen, lun.* The boy of six knows that this and that make these, the sum of the two; that ten and one are more than ten. "Nine and three?" "Seven," I fancy here is generally an ignorance of words rather than of numbers. Place nine pennies and three pennies before him, he does not choose the seven.

I consider myself somewhat familiar with the alphabet, but it was not so long ago that I first learned to repeat it backward, and should not feel sure of it now unless I should repeat it rapidly.

When writing this page, I stopped to ask myself what letter stands next before "I," and found myself at fault, till I commenced above and followed down till I reached it.

Ask the young learner what comes next after ten, and he answers five, not because he thinks *this* is more than *these*, but because he has not memorized the words, the names for each.

One and one, six and two, seven plus three, three from four, nine less seven, four plus five, six times three, two in eight, seem to me all memory, acquired by use and practice, practice perpetual to become familiar with the words, the names, and should always be verified with objects till the correct understanding is gained. And learning the multiplication-table is but memorizing the results

of additions. It is much as it would be for us to learn the second letter after *c*; the fourth after *m*; third before *u*; sixth before *h*; fifth after *o*. Drudgery? Monotony? I grant it—often the veriest essence of it, unless relieved and enlivened by some pleasing devices. No reason, no skill or ingenuity, but dull, dead, deadening monotony and drudgery. Fortunately, with our decimal system the monotony is limited, and after ten or twelve, at the most, we rise to a higher plane of mental activity, where reason and skill find a sphere for active employment and development.

As in learning to read, so here the short but often-repeated exercise, the small daily accretions, the introduction of blocks, cards, any little objects, lines, figures on the blackboard, making the numbers the means to some end or purpose, some concrete problem—these and many other ways can furnish variety and pleasure. The multiplication-table can, perhaps, be learned as quick, and possibly quicker, by the simple memorizing of words without any objects; but in the first attempts the words need to become so closely associated with the things that they shall be inseparable in the thought; that six shall be six some things. As the Concord philosophers would say, we need to "*is*" them, to "*thing*" things.

Beyond these elementary lessons arithmetic should be relieved of the bonds of routine. Analysis, brief, simple, free from vain repetitions and mummeries of words; logic, clear, direct, the plain *what?* and *what?* and *how?*—what have we? what do we want? and how do we obtain it?

Then should come practice, making familiar with the forms and methods of business, of daily life, how and what men buy and sell, the expedients by which credit is made available, and how the records of transactions are kept, the terms in daily use. But, let the subject be well

understood before beginning to formulate rules and theories.

Use is the fresh fruit in its season, and formulated rules but the dried apples, the canned peaches stored up for the winter's supply.

Nor do the true sphere and function of memory become less important when we come to the study of facts and events, in what are sometimes called the information branches—those studies of man, political and social, found in history, and somewhat at least in geography: his progress and development in the past, his industries and amusements, his life, his location, his condition, his migration and conflicts, internal and foreign; those studies where experiment and illustration are excluded, and diagram and apparatus superfluous; where it seems all memory, and too often proves all memorizing, pure and simple.

But it should be remembered that names and dates, battles and revolutions, statistics and genealogies of kings and chiefs, are in themselves as worthless as the lives of most of the actors, except in their relation to some important principle, tending to the advancement or degradation of mankind; save as they stand as representatives of some grand movement or suggestion of causes, resulting in the welfare or misery of society; something from which we may learn the paths that lead to success and well-being; how we may better promote the freedom with the dependence of the individual; cultivate the affections protected by the sanctity of the home; and secure to a great people the intelligent and unobstructed pursuit of their own aims and interests, under the protection of a stable, strong, firm, just, and far-reaching government, resting upon the enlightened choice of the governed. We have yet to learn how capital and labor, those essential elements of all growth, always associated, but, if out of poise,

always antagonistic and destructive, like opposite electricities, may be balanced and blended into the perfect vitality of the highest health and happiness.

For all the uses of history, the memory must grasp with retentive hold, not words but ideas, not forms of framed phrases but thoughts.

There may be expressions so deftly combined that the very words are things to be retained as a joy forever; but more often, in the effort at verbal accuracy, the pupil loses sight of the thought, and in a little time the recitation becomes but a meaningless repetition of unconsidered, undigested sentences.

Mere words without the thought are but shadowy forms, and the effort to recall the fact is too often like the attempt of Æneas to embrace the shade of his father, when "Thrice through his clasping arms the shadowy image escaped him."

Nor is the fact learned in set phrase often available for future use. We learn one thing here and another there, but do not often wish to use them in the same relations.

Most of what we call originality of expression or of thought is but a rearrangement, a new setting, with different workmanship, for other uses. Perhaps, too, on a whole page there may be but one or two points of value for our present use, and far better than memorizing the page is the power to discern these points. The memory has its limits, and the amount of matter forbids the memorizing of all, and hardly can the pupil too early learn to cull from the unsorted mass what is suited to his purpose.

Think of memorizing one of our morning papers, with a supplement! Yet no one can fail to find something of interest.

In this direction should the instruction be directed.

Let the lesson be first gone over with the teacher, and by question and suggestion the leading points noted; the difficult expressions sometimes made plainer; reference to other sources made; the argument, or causes and effects, traced.

Then may the pupil begin the study and preparation with definite purpose and success, and often but little more study will be required for parts of the lesson. Instead of memorizing two or three hundred words, a half-dozen clear thoughts are to be fixed in the memory.

And these are not be recalled by sheer force, but will be so related that the one follows the other by natural, easy suggestion. The first attempts to run the author's round of words in recitation should be checked, and the pupil put upon an intelligent path.

The rapid utterance, the indistinct enunciation, the expressionless (because unthinking) reproduction of another's words, will with care soon give place to a clear, distinct, and thoughtful, though sometimes slow and hesitating, re-creation of the thought in his own words. Not only memory, but reason and judgment, taste in the choice of words, will have been exercised and cultivated, and the pupil takes his seat a stronger, better trained, and more accurate scholar. He has taken a step upward as well as onward; his field of vision is broader and more beautiful, and far richer in its promise of the future. He has learned, too, to think while speaking, to meet his fellows with a manlier look, and is better fitted to perform the duties of a citizen in a land where clear thought and well-ordered speech are the seal of his birthright to respect and honor.

Far pleasanter than the glib-tongued recital is that look of thoughtful effort on the pupil's face during an occasional momentary pause in his recital.

In this way the few definite dates that are important in school life may be fixed with comparative ease, and they really are fewer than sometimes supposed, however the books may abound with them. Histories, like newspapers, are written for different classes and different occasions, and the paper that should omit the record of some base-ball game, with the errors made and runs earned by Jones or Brown, would fail of its purpose as truly as in omitting England's doings in Egypt. And the many dates and statistics are not so much for present memorizing as for occasional reference. Who would care to know the exact date of the first settlement of all our States, or of the birth and death of all our Presidents? Yet for special purposes any of them may be looked for at some time. The professor of history may fitly furnish his memorial storehouse with much that to me would be useless.

A few grand central points may be fixed, and around them, by some association, clustered many others with sufficient definiteness for intelligent use. You might almost enumerate upon your fingers enough to place in proper perspective the whole outline of American or English history. As for the names of all the so-called early kings of England, we might as well learn the names of the commissioners of the hundred counties of Illinois.

All history is related, and the parts should be studied, not as isolated facts, but in their connections now with this and now with that correlated fact, now in their resemblances and again in their contrasts, now as causes, now as results; like the parts of a picture, which, seen as a whole, can never be forgotten, but, cut out and exhibited each by itself, would be unmeaning and quickly lapse into well-deserved forgetfulness.

Often, again, some striking incident or personal allusion, some anecdote or pithy remark, will vivify and afterward recall the whole.

In nothing, perhaps, more than in geography does that full understanding, that clear perception, without which there can be no useful memory, fail of its realization.

The very imagination of the child, which enables him so readily to grasp supposed facts, here often but intensifies the mischief. The ideas which he forms upon many subjects are often as wonderful as they are natural. That oft-told incident in one of our own schools, where a pupil had been told that "The ox took the food into his second stomach and digested it," which he reproduced at examination in the form that "It took it into its stomach and died yesterday," is not an exaggerated example.

What must be the mental picture of the pupil of the fourth grade, commencing the study of geography with those astronomical and metaphysical puzzles and conundrums concerning the motions of the earth, the circles, zones, races of men, religions, governments, and stages of civilization, those broad generalizations and classifications by which the sages and philosphers are sometimes mazed and befogged!

Not much wonder that the little girl, after a fluent *memoriter* recital of these mysteries, upon being asked if she had ever seen the earth, promptly but very properly answered in the negative.

Let the pupil rather commence with what he knows; give him a starting-point where he can feel that he is dealing with verities, where he can verify his conclusions. His first geography-lessons may well be of the schoolroom, fixing localities, getting directions, learning north and south, east and west; let him plan it on his slate or

the blackboard. Let him then study his district, with some of its streets and prominent buildings. My own geographical knowledge has always been bereft of half its value from my early study of the map facing the south; and to-day I have to make a mental conversion—the east of the map is always the west of the real world. The map of the world, the hemispheres, should always be preceded by the globe or some spherical object.

More than one college-learned man have I seen caught by the very simple trap of asking him the direction of the north pole from Australia.

Not much minute detail need be learned, or latitudes and longitudes memorized. With the fullest and most minute study the map must be brought out whenever a Franco-Prussian or Egyptian war is on the stage. Places start at once into prominence which had never found an assignment on the map. It matters not so much what form of words is used in this early school life. The clear conception of the things, the facts, is essential. And for this there are no other witnesses so credible and reliable as sight and touch. The object, the picture, the ball, map, diagram—all are to be seen, examined, made, if possible. Then we may afterward be as careful as we will in the choice of our words and the forms of our definition.

When memory shall take its proper place and our pupils be taught to observe, to think, to do, instead of to memorize and repeat, then will the growth of our pupils compel the respect of the wise for our schools, and the fruit of the tree of knowledge be for the sustenance and health of the people.

IV.

THE ELEMENTS OF GROWTH IN SCHOOL-LIFE.

THAT memory should have played so prominent a part in our school-life is not to be wondered at, as it is, perhaps, the most important and mysterious of our mental faculties—the one faculty that makes all the others of any worth, binding by its infinite attractions the separate atoms of existence into one glorious whole, affording the possibility of a reasonable, intelligent life. Nor can the value of its marvelous powers be overestimated, nor too careful heed be given to its proper training and development. It is only the misapplication of its forces that is sometimes deplored, when, instead of acting as an all-pervading gravitation, molding the bright family of worlds and holding planets and suns in their harmonious circles, it would supplant the living principles of growth and progress, dragging the unvitalized star-dust of the mental universe down to a shapeless chaos of darkness and death.

The first conscious act of the child's awakening intelligence is to observe—to see, to hear, to touch. How vague and shadowy the procession that passes over his tender sensorium! And yet these sensations are to be the alphabet by which the world and its occupants are to be revealed to him; his reasonings and conclusions thereon shall constitute his wisdom; and the conduct to which they shall lead him be the determination of his usefulness and the condition of his happiness.

To observe, to think, to do—the three elements of all progress, without whose perfect blending all education must be sadly deficient and incomplete, and our best efforts illusory and ineffective—in what sweet accord they unite

during the early years, when the young being is adjusting itself to its new surroundings, and getting its powers of body and mind well in hand for the outreaching life; and how ready the reward to his ever-delightsome efforts! With no motive power but his own natural desires, no guidance save their speediest gratification, his advance, both in knowledge and power, might well put to the blush the maturer guardians of his later life. And if, upon his entering school, we are to be of service in leading him by wiser ways, it will be, not by checking his childish curiosity, but by giving it a surer direction; not in quenching any one of his desires, but in pointing to higher gratifications; not by diminishing his happiness, but by helping him to make it more perfect and enduring; not by calling a halt to his new-born powers, but by directing him how he may observe more accurately, think more clearly, and act more efficiently, because more wisely.

But by the most earnest and well-directed efforts little would be gained, and we should all be but savages at the last, should we depend solely upon ourselves—could we not, on stepping-stones of the dead past, availing ourselves of the world's wisdom, already won, rise thereon to greater heights. And where but to the written, the printed volume shall we turn for the best and fullest records, or where else make faithful minute of our own successes and failures? Language—reading and writing—is the key that shall unlock the treasures of the past, and in the mastery of this will be found the chief employment of the early school-life.

But language is the expression of thought, and without this the ready calling of words is of no more worth than the twitter and chirping of birds, and from the first the two should always be associated—the thought suggesting the word, the word the thought, forever inseparable.

But, till the mind has somewhat furnished itself with ideas, hanging its walls with pictures, and storing its secret cells with abstractions for study and contemplation, the thought must come as a suggestion of the senses, those silent but watchful messengers waiting ever upon our waking hours to minister to our needs and pleasures, and making report of aught that may concern our welfare. Readiest to our hand comes the visible object—the hat, the book, the man ; then the easily recognized representation, the picture, followed in due time by the arbitrary sign, the word, the name. Even now, too, may the interest of the pupil be quickened by letting him tell, in simple, easy word and sentence, what he has already learned, and leading him on to discover something as yet unknown to him—his little errors of speech by use set right, the strangeness of the school-room and the unwonted sound of his own voice there made sweetly familiar, and his foreign lip soon beginning to curve in loyal lines.

Now may he, by easy, quick transition, try to make himself the words ; or, perchance, essay with unskilled hand his first attempt at art in the little picture of the hat, the book, the man. Soon will the apparent love and gentle sympathy of the teacher begin to be reflected in his own confiding face and glistening eye. There must be ever the thing to suggest the thought, the thought expressing itself in words, the word fitly framed in the sentence, and made visible on the slate or page, and the sentence woven so as to produce mental pictures, like the changing kaleidoscope, ever fresh and new ; thought again suggesting thought, making study an inspiration and labor a delight.

At every step of his progress, even to make progress possible, there must be something new, some new arrange-

ment of old material, something for the pupil to handle, examine, to find out for himself; something for him to think, to reason about; something to devise, to invent, to do; some desirable purpose to accomplish. The very effort, which might otherwise be but the essence of drudgery and dullness, may, with a due motive presented, awakening his childish spirit, become like the glad motion of a new life. It is but the Dead Sea fruit of a perished and bitter past, the thought that labor, that work is and must be irksome. In the ardor of conflict the soldier is not conscious of the wounds he receives, nor any more does the student think of the toil, in view of the end to be attained. It is the aimless, fruitless, compelled toil that burdens and degrades, against which the free heart rebels, and which the weary drudge seeks to shirk.

The motive may be a fortune to be won, a future home, or empty fame; or, for the little ones, more valued still, and more efficient, a pleasant look of recognition, a kindly word, a well-earned commendation, or even the consciousness of successful accomplishment. If for one taste of the tree of knowledge our parents threw paradise away, surely for the banquet to which the wise teacher leads, these little ones will gladly seek it again. Toil for the sake of toil is not labor, nor suffering for the sake of suffering, martyrdom; and subjection to unworthy imposition is not a desirable or useful discipline.

When the pupil has advanced, as he will have done, perhaps by the end of the first term, so as profitably to use the book in reading, a new and fruitful field opens before him. The words that he has already learned stand out bright and clear, but in a different order, to tell him tales of new interest. Not now does the teacher need to stand over each, one by one, pointing with pencil or finger at the unmeaning words, while the rest of the class

are gazing listlessly around, or covertly working out their roguish devices; but as they already had gathered before the chart or blackboard, so can they now take their places, an interested class, pleased to apprehend the thoughts expressed in the well-known characters. They have the material prepared, so that instead of blundering blindly and hopelessly over the darksome way, they find the little mental pictures following in pleasing variety before their minds, as they compass line after line.

In telling of what they have read, they have no longer the trouble of repeating the precise words as read, for the familiar image is before them, and with an ever-increasing and more clearly-defined vocabulary, and more correct idiom, can they reproduce the story, as they would describe an object or a picture presented to the eye. Now, too, they may be led to make their own little stories, or give descriptions of what they have seen; by nicer perception to discern new qualities, or uses of articles in the room or at home, and ere long place them in visible form on their slates, converting their talks into veritable compositions.

That old bugbear of composition will soon disappear when we understand that it is simply putting on paper what we have made familiar by discussion or study, or perhaps what we have already said. Like that pointing with pencil or finger, to which I have alluded, many of the faults which we find it so difficult to remedy in after days and years, are faults into which we ourselves have led them by our early methods, or want of method.

This clear perception of the thought is the basis of all their mental life. In the neglect of this lies the lack of expression in reading, so often noticeable not only in the lower but in the higher grades, and sometimes in candidates for a teacher's certificate. There is no expression,

because there is nothing to express. It is a mere calling of empty words and barren sentences. It is often a physical rather than a mental act, and even in that respect is little better than a failure; for the absence of thought has left uncalled for the clearer, distinct enunciation, the nicer inflections and shades of meaning, which demand skill in the use of the organs of speech. Such an exercise dulls the perceptions, deadens the sensibilities, and dwarfs the reason, and returns the pupil to his seat a more inattentive, weaker, and stupider scholar than before.

Nor does the evil end here. It has made the next lesson more difficult. What the pupil might have accomplished with profit and delight, had the previous lesson been clearly understood, finding but an added inspiration, from his very habit of success, over the little hindrances in his path, now appears an insurmountable obstacle, from which his indolent nature shrinks unabashed. Nor yet have we exhausted the evil. Like all physical and moral decay, it spreads and perpetuates itself. Over the enchanting pages of history or biography, from which, with a thrill of joyous exultation, he should be able to extract the worth by a single perusal, he stumbles and blunders wearily and uninformed. And if, as in the last struggles of expiring hope, he essays with convulsive energy the task with contracted brow and clutching his hair —you have seen him study—he begins: "That night, leaving his camp-fires"—"that night, leaving his camp-fires"—"that night, leaving his camp-fires"—"burning to deceive the enemy"—"burning to deceive the enemy"—"burning to deceive the enemy"—"he swept by country roads"—"he swept by country roads"—"he swept by country roads"—"round the British"—"round the British"—"round the British." Words!

words ! ! words ! ! ! Ask him now of Washington's attack on Princeton. You can guess at the result. He has no idea that reading is study.

This perfect union, this blending of the word with the thought, the sign with the thing signified, at the beginning does not come from the dictionary, but from use. It must, from its very nature, be essentially accomplished before grammar or dictionary can be of any avail. And there can be no greater bar to success, no more deadly foe to real progress, than too early reliance upon either of them. A little book recently republished, written by a young Portuguese, is a good illustration of dictionary-learning, equaled only by some specimens from our own schools. The foundation must be securely laid in the familiar conversation, the examination and comparison, the question and answer, as the child has already so successfully begun to do in the home and on the street. It is astonishing how seldom the little Arab of the street, or the little cherub of the home, for that matter, ever misapplies a slang word or phrase.

And when he can read with some facility, then should come the supplementary book, or little pages, which he has not already learned by rote from listening to his elder brothers or the more advanced classes—something which has the same words employed in other relations, and with different shades of meaning. Not by reading and re-reading the same extract over and over again, till it can be said backward or forward, or either side up, with equal ease, nor by the long rhetorical drill, does the pupil learn to read. Not by telling him to give this or that inflection or emphasis, or by parroting such and such tones, does he compass it. Find what he means by his reading; why does he read so and so? With his own understanding, when he has any at all, he may be right, and, if

properly taught, will rarely be in the wrong, however he may differ from you or me. The prattling tyrants of the household do not often err in inflection, emphasis, or intonation. When the word, by use and practice, has become itself an embodied thought, then we can pass from the concrete and imperfect to the abstract and ideal. Then may we claim companionship with the wise and great of the world and sit at the banquet of the sages, furnished from all ages and every clime with the science, the wisdom, the wit, and the poetry of which we can now be the appreciative partakers. Then, leaving the paths of error into which their feet unwittingly strayed, and carefully shunning the false lights that have lured them on to danger and doubt, may we with safety and assured success direct our course toward the abode of a wise and noble humanity.

The word, spoken and written, as the expression, the embodiment of thought, is the vitalizing element of all civilization and enlightenment, making each of us the sum of all, rendering each onward step secure, and furnishing in its records the foundation for further progress. In the beginning of all advancement, with its creative and preserving power, is the word, and without the word there is no accurate, true thought.

Number, too—the motive and the measure of all material progress and the explanation of so many phenomena—must be included in all true education. A happy day for society, as well as for the deserving teacher, will it be when the mentometer shall be devised of such delicate construction as to enable us to record and present to the public eye the quantity and quality of mental and moral growth and development, when our record-books can be read as easily as their ledgers.

Nor will the value of the study of numbers be less-

ened when we shall rid ourselves of the old-time error that it is the true test of mental power—that he who is good in figures is good in everything. By trying to secure too much, we may lose our hold upon the true benefits to be derived. There are mathematicians and mathematicians; some of sound judgment and intellect have I met, and some numerical cranks. In pure mathematics we reason from definitions, certain and unvarying, which, in the real world, in the contact of mind with mind, we never have, but deal largely with probabilities and presumed motives, where success depends largely upon knowledge of character, of men, and upon skill in forecasting results.

Not only facility in the use of numbers, but clear perception and sound judgment in obtaining correct data, and prompt, decisive, and skillful action, are needed in the affairs of life. Though mathematical has little in common with moral reasoning, yet the mathematical sense —skill in the application of numbers—is important alike to the banker and the artist, the astronomer and the poet, the musician and the housekeeper. Here, too, should the child's early, his natural method be regarded. We should seek, not to obstruct and dam the sparkling current of the child-nature, producing but a stagnant marsh, or at best a dull canal, but to guide it in gradually deepening channels by a better way, through greener meadows and more flowery fields, not where it will be held barred and bound as by icy fetters, but with the sunlight playing upon its surface, making sweet music of its rippling murmurs, ere yet it learns with calmer flow to bear the burdens of the merchandise and navies of the world.

To observe, to think, to do, in sweet succession till almost blended into one, are still the threads of that golden cord by which the pupil is guided through the

mazes of ignorance to the light of intelligent life. Pleased with the rattle of the nursery, tickled, perchance, with the Kindergarten straws, with pleased fancy he comes now to the blocks, the buttons, the cards of the school-room. He takes them, he handles them, he counts them —combines, piles, takes down, separates, and arranges— learning his ones, his twos, and threes by short and progressive steps. He learns, too, their names, and, in due time, the signs, the figures, and how to make them, till they become as familiar as his own face in the glass, and he has no more need to count them than to count his eyes or his ears. He may, perchance, vary his slate-work by little circles and triangles and squares, getting not only his addition, subtraction, and multiplication, but the alphabet of his geometry, too, before he knows that there is such a science as either. Nor would it be amiss sometimes to deck his slate with his attempts at men and dogs and birds, singly or in company, taking on drawing also as one of his unconscious arts. What squads and companies of those rude slate-soldiers have I drawn and drilled and slaughtered while sitting upon that board-bench in the old country school-house beneath the hill when I was thought to be bowing devoutly over my sums!

When this first year's work has been now well digested and assimilated, and become as much a part of his mental nature as his last year's dinner has of his physical, how naturally falls in that short-hand way of crowning the tens by putting them in the second place, in the king-row, as it were—the only royal way of learning! How these regal tens may lead their humble units during the second year of assimilation and growth! Little use have we here for those long lines and towering columns of figures, as much beyond and above the pupil's mental as

his physical grasp. And why waste much time or strength at all on numbers higher than millions? They meet all the requirements of ninety-nine in a hundred of our busy men except in speaking of the national debt, and the naming of that conveys no meaning or impression save a general sense of greatness and vagueness. What opportunities here as we advance to tempt the new-fledged souls to a trial of their powers—to give them a chance themselves to observe, to think, to do!

If the old district school, whose glories are sung about as often and long as those of our mothers' pies, had any superior merit it surely was not in its methods of instruction, but in letting us alone to do our sums at our own sweet will. Yet in recalling those glad days we all forget the old rhymes:

> Multiplication is vexation;
> Division is as bad;
> The rule of three doth puzzle me,
> And fractions make me mad.

Not all happiness and courtesy even then, as is attested by the usual last-day refrain:

> Good-by, scholars; good-by, school;
> Good-by, master, and you're an old fool.

But we may well imitate more often the old way of letting pupils do for themselves. Rainy days are the days for fishing, and why not, after one of those bright "apple showers" of the later autumn, cut a few of those apples into halves and quarters? A boy can count the number of halves as easily as that of wholes, and perhaps he may devise a way of writing to designate the halves and quarters. None but very young parents name the child before his birth. Without rule or direction let him

find out how many square inches in one face of his slate, perhaps by marking it off as a checker-board and counting the squares; or, may be, by a higher flight, counting the rows and the number in a row; the duller ones aided, perhaps, by asking them how many panes in a window. Let him compute how many yards of plain carpeting will cover the platform or the floor, making his own measurements; how many of figured carpeting. He who succeeds will need to learn no rule. He has already learned in the doing, and in a manner that shall remain. Let him draw the diagonal, dividing into two equal parts, and by a little observation and thought he has more of a triangle than is usually obtained from that old confusing demonstration in the geometry. Do something to quicken his dull nature, or, rather, to guide his restless, eager, longing nature into a thoughtful, persistent, and useful channel, and get rid of that everlasting, never-ending working of identical problems under some given rule—that burden and bane of so many school-rooms.

Of course, the whole country is not yet subdued and possessed, but, following this pioneer work under skillful guidance, comes the steady tramp of the trained battalions, with ordnance and camp equipage, with stout hearts and strong arms, resistless, instead of becoming entangled in impenetrable jungles and mired in the morasses of the wilderness—their supply-wagons converted into an ambulance train for the sick and disabled, the tattered banners of the surviving few, if victorious at last, raised by feeble hands over a hospital of invalids.

Especially is geography open to this intelligent work, affording opportunity for careful observation, from which is derived rich food for thought and reflection, leading to useful and educating action. In the school-room itself, with its rows of desks; the building, with its halls and

rooms to be measured and planned ; the adjoining streets, their width, and the length of the blocks ; the presentation of the district on the slate or the vertical blackboard —may be found the most important elements of the study. By the use of the sphere the cause of day and night may be easily comprehended, but not yet the seasons, with the long days of summer and the long nights of winter. Knowing the circumference of the earth and its revolution in twenty-four hours, the pupil may himself determine how much passes under the sun in an hour or minute, and the difference in time between here and New York or San Francisco, and perhaps why the equator and its parallels and the meridians were devised. Possibly the county with its towns in outline would not be amiss, and the State with its chief features and towns. The crayon should be as familiar to his hand as the musket to the soldier's.

Let him see how rivers are made, like the Mississippi and its majestic confluent, and the broad delta at its mouth. In the higher grade, when he shall read in "Evangeline," for instance, "How the mighty father of waters seizes the hills in his hands, and drags them down to the ocean," he will see the difference between the scientist and the poet ; or, perhaps, how the poet must be himself a man of science ; nay, rather a painter, a philosopher, a moralist, a linguist, as well, often seeing things beyond the scientist's ken, evolving systems and deducing lessons of which he never dreamed. What vistas of delight might open before the pupil at every step, his only sorrow being that the time was so short !

The motive, the prime purpose of the public school, as may be seen from its origin and history, is intellectual culture ; and a sad day for the people, as well as for the schools, would it be if this purpose should be essentially

changed, and they primarily devoted to the training of the laboring classes for their several vocations. From this intellectual culture the ingenuity and versatility of the American workman has become almost proverbial. He may not be in some departments so perfect a machine, but he is more of a thinking man. Half a century ago, when the bulk of the population were farmers and mechanics, and their children were in the district school for three months in the summer and three in the winter till twelve or fourteen years of age, following with a term or two at the academy or select school, their studies interspersed with the various labors of the farm and the home, there was no thought or need of aught else. For the professional few there was the college, affording a little more Latin and Greek, but much less of science, than the present high-school. But the decided and rapid determination, within the last twenty years especially, of the young blood of the country to the large cities and towns—those centers of modern life—has changed the conditions, and, with all our talk of the new education, it would not be strange if we should seem to lag behind the marvelous movement of our civilization ; if, in short, as to meeting the requirements of the times, the old district school should be found fully in line with the schools of to-day with all their improvements. The merits of the district school were little, but the demands were less, while ideal perfection would be counted among the shortcomings of to-day. It is not in any lack of sympathy with the activities of the hour that we are in fault. The tendency to business is too strong already, but largely to those branches that are commercial and speculative instead of to the farm and the workshop.

The frenzied cries and shoutings of the exchange deafen the ears of our youth to the calmer "call of in-

cense-breathing morn," and the jargon and clamor of court and forum drown the busy hum of honest industry. Mere physical labor the children of our schools and age may properly disdain as the lot of the ignorant and unfortunate. But with the active brain we need to ally the discerning eye and the skillful hand, and to our acquaintance with books to add the knowledge of things. We must seek to furnish to our pupils something of that which the field and forest, the garden and the workshop, supply to his brother in the country.

The three learned professions of our fathers no longer monopolize the trained intellect of to-day; and in the ability to perceive, to think, to do, many a one whose academic escutcheon is all covered over with the heraldic devices, "This certifies," "This certifies," and "This certifies," must give place to his unlaureate neighbor. Aside from the field of mechanical invention and skill, the upheaval, as it were, of society in the line of decorative art—we can hardly call it a development—is opening many new channels of mental and manual activity. For all of these a correct training in drawing and design is the first requisite; nor is there, in fact, any department of business or professional life where its want is not felt. The use of the pencil can be as readily learned as that of the pen, and might well be as universal.

But as the child can be pleased with the little simply-told tale ere yet it knows a word or letter; as in reading there should be some careful study of words, united with their ready and discriminating use—their only worth—so should the elementary lines and curves be interspersed with some picture-making, some attempts at shading and design. A fairly proportioned figure and a meritorious design may be accomplished long before the perfect straight line can be achieved. What kind of industrial

training could or should be made a part of our curriculum is the question of the day, but not the purpose of this paper. One enthusiast is partially successful in this, and another in that; but just what shall finally take its place alongside of the reader and arithmetic still awaits the successful wooer. But, however this may be, we should seek by some means—a few of which it has been my purpose to suggest—to cultivate in our pupils a quicker and more accurate perception; a clearer and closer logic; a sounder judgment; a nicer and truer taste; a wiser forecast and more skillful adaptation of means to ends; how better to observe, to think, to do; to show him that, whatever his advantages, the true man is always a self-made man; that the highest acquisition is the full possession of all his powers of body and mind; and in a free land the only wise ruler he who can control all those powers, and direct them to high and noble ends.

V.

THE SCHOLARSHIP AIMED AT IN THE SCHOOL.

THE quickened interest of thoughtful minds under the impulse of what we are pleased to call the new education, finds its fullest expression in the discussion of new and improved methods. But methods are not for their own sake; they are but means to an end, and the value of any instrumentality must be largely judged by the worthiness of the purpose which it is designed to accomplish. It matters little how smoothly and swiftly the wheels of our machinery run or how generous the product they may furnish if the product itself be useless.

The purpose of the public school, as seen in its origin and history, is intellectual culture, and those methods only can have a strong and lasting hold on the public mind which best promote this. However pleasing and attractive the work may be, however we may for the time command the public ear and listen delighted to its words of praise, that system and those methods alone must win in the end and enjoy a lasting reputation, which continue to send forth their pupils with a better knowledge, a higher intelligence, a clearer understanding, a more thorough scholarship, than their fellows.

Not long ago I was present at an exercise conducted by an accomplished and progressive teacher, the immediate subject of which was the use of the tendrils of a vine in the pupil's hand. After a satisfactory conclusion had been reached, the teacher remarked in closing: "I don't care at all about your knowing the use of the tendril, but merely the proper method of investigation."

But, pleasing as the exercise had been, I could not help asking myself as I came away, What was the use of a proper method if there was nothing of value to be learned; why build a good road, plated though it be, that leads nowhere, or the need of study at all, or the development of strength for such study when the knowledge to be secured is of no worth? As Mrs. Browning so pathetically has it:

> . . . But that's out of nature. We all
> Have been patriots, yet each house must always keep one;
> 'Twere imbecile, hewing out roads to a wall.
> And, when Italy's made, for what end is it done,
> If we have not a son?

"Do men labor for that which is not bread, which is food for neither body nor mind? What encouragement

for future investigation when nothing of worth remains from our present pains?

The blessing of labor we admit; but the arm is best nerved by the hope of the harvest, and the growth of our powers is best served in the pursuit of that at which all our efforts aim at the last—the acquisition of knowledge, all that is highest, purest, noblest, best.

The old talk of the threefold nature of man and the necessity of a full, complete development, barren of fruit as it sometimes seems in our schools, had become so familiar as to be almost a by-word a whole generation ago. Yet our schools were not established and are not sustained for the purpose of physical culture. Better to that end would have been the gymnasium, or a base-ball club, or in the country a turn with the shovel and the hoe. It is, of course, for the wise teacher to see that in the work of intellectual culture the health and physical grace of the pupil shall not deteriorate, making him with all his mental equipments but a bundle of bodily woes and weaknesses.

Nor was it for moral training and the formation of character, except as the mental culture shall tend to that result, that the public school was instituted. Morals are not taught in fourteen weeks or in any number of stated recitations, but should be like the prayer of the Christian:

> The teacher's vital breath,
> The teacher's native air,
> Her watchword at the school-room door.
> Her self-hood everywhere,

that with bodily health unimpaired, strong in the integrity of a high and noble character induced by a cultured intellect and the habits of industry and self-restraint by which it may best be secured, our pupils without fear

and without reproach may go forth like true knights to battle for the right in the complete panoply of a true scholarship—a scholarship which, knowing the experiences of the past with its errors and failures, may be the better able to discern and follow the paths of honor and success; a scholarship which, in so far as it has been attained, has ever been one of the most efficient agents in lifting men from the sloughs of idleness and degradation, dignifying labor and providing even for their idle hours the resources of happiness and noble virtues. For this intellectual furnishing we believe in the new education, though we ourselves were never guided by its smiles nor ever felt the enlivening influence of its wiser methods. Yet many of us can doubtless recall some individual teacher, some man, some woman, whose finer nature or truer sympathy has changed the current of our school, our world life, perchance, "made this and that other world another world" to our wakened thought; and we believe there is a new education, though there may not be and probably is not anything in it that has not in some degree been practiced by good teachers ever since schools began.

We believe in the new education as we believe in a new tune, though it contains not a tone that was not in the old despised one. We believe in it for the spirit of humanity underlying, overlying it, inspiring it, which makes the living child its subject, its untiring study, its ceaseless hope; for its truer appreciation of the child-nature in its restless eagerness, its longings, its love of nature and of life, and its ceaseless strivings to acquaint itself with its powers, its capabilities, and its surroundings; and for the wiser presentation of subjects suited to each stage of its advance and development, skillfully guiding its unrepressed and gladsome activities into the

fruitful paths of experience and wiser satisfactions, turning aside from the dreary waste of enforced drudgery into the fresh and flowery fields of earnest because curious effort; and we believe in it especially for the better understanding of things and their names, its nicer observation of qualities and forms, its clearer conception of ideas, and its finer expression of thought, which tend to and constitute the beginnings of scholarly learning, learning the meaning of things around them by handling and feeling them rather than from the dictionary, the definitions and power of familiar words from daily use rather than from the grammar.

The active boy needs no geography to guide him through the nursery nor gazetteer to tell him of the contents of his pockets or his playhouse; but rather here does he gain those first lessons which make the dictionary and geography available in the study of things beyond his reach.

In the six years preceding his admission to the schoolroom what has been the work of the child? He has developed his physical, mental, moral powers, it is true, or rather they have been of necessity developed in his endless efforts to familiarize himself with the world he lives in.

He has performed a task that few of us have the energy and enterprise to accomplish; he has learned a language in all its spirit and its life; has learned his mother's, his father's name, and the names of all the objects about him; he has early learned that fire will burn, that cold will freeze, and knows, beyond the power of Webster or Worcester to tell him, the meaning of burn and freeze; and by many a bump has the force of attraction been impressed upon him. He has learned to distinguish the soft cheek and heart of his mother from his father's roughly bearded face and rougher, sterner nature; and

his whole soul has been aroused to the love of knowledge and the keen pleasure in the pursuit of it, and not without a little thoughtful investigation can we realize how much of the valuable knowledge of objects around us is acquired during the first fifteen or twenty months. All these acquirements, too, have been made for themselves. No "constitutionals" have called him abroad.

His mind has been developed; his character has been forming, and but too often beyond the teacher's power to change it; and his hands have been made obedient to his will; but the tree whose fruit he has persistently tried to pluck has been the tree of knowledge.

Nor is it for the simple training of his various powers merely or chiefly that he turns his strengthening footsteps to the school-room door. In clearness and distinctness of vision and in keenness of hearing the red-man of our native woods surpasses our best results; his fleetness of foot but mocks our sluggish tread, and the tomahawk and scalping-knife impressively testify to his manual dexterity and skill. His reasoning powers find exercise and expression in the hunt and the well-laid ambuscade, and to his ingenuity and shrewd devices his writhing victims bear tearful and truthful witness, while for his memory, the Indian, like the Bourbon, never forgets.

He learns to do, in the only true way, by the doing, and does it well from age to age the same, but, like the Bourbon, too, he never learns anything.

Of progress, that progress which, with the recorded experiences of the past as a basis, by new discovery and invention, is ever reaching outward and upward for other knowledge and higher learning, he knows nothing. In the skillful training of body and mind he sets a worthy example, but fails in the essentials of sound learning and scholarship.

It is said that the difference between civilized and savage life consists in the greater number of things that the civilized man possesses. The wigwam of the savage, in the advance, changes into the log hut; the hut expands into a framed building; the wooden frame, when buildings approach too near, is supplanted by brick or stone, which soon takes on graving and sculpture. While for the bearskin come the chair, the table, the sofa, plate, painting, music, until the poet's dream is realized,

> And we see the narrow kitchen walls
> Stretching away into marble halls;
> The weary wheel to a spinet turns,
> The tallow candle an astral burns.

So from stolid ignorance to enlightened power there is the sum of things known, of thoughts, ideas, inventions, science, art, and literature to compass.

The beginning of each age being the accomplishment of all the preceding, the race continues its limitless advance. The toiler of to-day is restless and unsatisfied with the luxuries, the attainments, the enjoyments which fulfilled the hopes of the monarchs and sages of yesterday.

The sesame to all these wished-for possessions, to this progress, is found inscribed on the printed page, which keeps faithful record of each onward step, each true or false effort of the race, so that we are no longer compelled, like the Arctic voyager, to trace the same frozen and fatal route, feeding our own fruitless hopes, perhaps, upon the withered hearts of our companions, but leaving behind us all the vanished past, except its lessons of wisdom and its hoarded treasures, we push on toward the wished-for goal.

Apart from its theological sense, in view of its in-

estimable value, we might almost say, as it reads, that all Scripture, all written record, is given by inspiration, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction. A broader and more accurate knowledge, a higher enlightment, a wiser intelligence, is the primary purpose and the greatest want of our schools.

Education does not, we think, in its etymology or true meaning consist in a drawing out, a simple training of the mental powers; but it is a leading forth into the world and into life, into a wider sphere, with an ever-firmer step, and larger wisdom what to avoid and what to choose. It is not the training of the athlete, who, with only Nature's furnishing, by mere strength and skill seeks to win for the sake of winning, with no reward but the shouts of the ring and a few more disfiguring bruises, but rather the education of a Von Moltke, who, without superior bodily force, it may be, with all the appliances and improvements of modern science, with well-studied maps and charts of the country to be invaded spread out before him, with its rivers, its passes, its supplies, and defenses, and a thorough acquaintance with the character and designs of his opposers, can intelligently and promptly combine and direct the resources of an empire to the victorious accomplishment of his plans—a furnishing by the aid of which "one man can chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight."

Where would the mailed crusader or the trained gladiator of the arena, with all their brawny growth, stand before this master of accumulated forces?

It is in this spirit of accumulation that the highest success and best progress of the school, the counting-room, or the cabinet consists, and by the want of it can we explain the emptiness of the efforts of an Abélard, with all his brilliancy and logical acuteness, and, we

sometimes think, of the endless questionings and hair-splittings and verbal perversions of a Socrates.

The first step in the marvelous developments of modern science is the careful record of observed facts and phenomena. Effort without capital is wasted. So in school the first, the chief, work of the first year is the enlargement and improvement of the pupil's language, the attainment of a greater number and a more accurate use of words as the expression of facts and conclusions of thought, and only as the expression of thought, and generally with reference to material things, such as can be verified by an appeal to the senses; thoughts and ideas necessitating a more careful examination of objects, as to size, form, color, sound, and use, enlarging his information and quickening his perception for closer investigation.

No place here for the incorrect sentence to be amended, the imperfect sentence to be completed, the disarranged words to be formed into a sentence. Like letters to be formed into a word, they may serve as an innocent puzzle for an evening's diversion, but are apart from the work of the school-room, which should ever be the accumulation of words for use, and useful thought and knowledge through the medium of words. From the more correct use of words in relation to familiar objects, and a nicer appreciation of their meanings and force, to be secured by child or man, not from dictionary, but from use alone, comes a wider knowledge of persons and events, their properties and relations, and perhaps some simple systematizing of his knowledge.

Never talk for the sake of talk, but for better and nicer expression of thought, a clearer knowledge of the concrete as the sure and firm basis of the abstract, in order that imagination—that most fruitful of our facul-

ties—may not be the companion of grotesque fancy and wild vagary.

When the words of our pupils in school shall be as clear and significant as they have been in their previous daily life may we hope that in these bright celestial urns philosophy shall not seem so dark a decoction to the common mind, nor sweet poesy so rayless of sense as it often now appears on the pages of our literary magazines.

For imagination is but the natural outcome of a more careful, a better learning; though, if the young girl of nineteen were advised to cultivate the imagination of her pupils, she would, I think, understand anything rather than that.

What is the opening of the twenty-third Psalm but the highest type of imagination? "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." Why not my father, my guardian, my guide? Yet it was not strange for the weary, hunted David, with the picture in his mind of the little helpless flock, so dependent upon his care, yet resting so securely under the protection of him who had slain the lion and the bear, to exultingly exclaim, on waking from a moment of depression: "The *Lord* is *my* shepherd; *I* shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters."

No wrenching of the spirit here; no racking of the mental constitution; no strivings after the unattainable. It was simply the natural utterance of the knowing, trusting heart.

A person untaught or but half-taught might have expected the rippling, sparkling, bubbling waters; but one who has ever known the longing of the weary soul for rest has not to wait long with the inquiry why the poet chooses the quiet, shady pool, from whose cool draughts

he rises full of refreshment and strength, "He restoreth my soul."

So reliable a witness is sight, and so lasting the characters in which the records are written, that I believe the misspelled word, the imperfect sentence, the incorrect statement should no more be placed before the pupil's eye than poison should be mixed with his food or gunpowder given him for a plaything. And, if I mistake not the signs of the times, the day is not distant—is even now dawning—when our primary readers shall be filled with plain, simple, pleasing, correct, and instructive expressions of thought in place of the senseless twaddle, the stupid inanities, and sometimes slangy vulgarisms pawned off upon a too-confiding public by the thrifty book-makers, evidently as familiar with the real child as with a good school.

The pupil's own errors should be set right, his misjudgments corrected, his poor taste rectified, that he may clearly and correctly give full and free expression to true ideas founded upon a careful study of objects worthy of his best and lasting regard. Hardly can we overestimate the importance of this early habit of using words as the representatives of distinct ideas, and their proper arrangement into sentences for the plain expression of well-ascertained and clearly defined thoughts. Like the breath of heaven, it sweeps through the misty mazes of the seemingly dark and befogged brain, through which now the sweet light may stream, quickening dull thought into budding life, bringing a new sparkle to the lusterless eye, while over the heavy, sullen features softly creeps a smile of pleased intelligence.

Right here in the beginning of school-life is laid the basis of success, and in the almost total lack of illustrative material in the past may be found the cause of the

irksomeness and barrenness of schools, in the uninterested use of but half-understood words, and the consequent memorizing of wholly unmeaning sentences.

How many a boy or girl, the charm of the home circle and the life of the playground, ready with his little story of play or adventure, at no loss to tell the number of his marbles or pet rabbits, can't learn his geography, don't understand his arithmetic, wants to be excused from grammar, never could write composition—oftentimes with his desk crowded with forbidden notes in answer to those he may have written!

He is interested in his rabbit because he caught it, and is soon familiar with its proper food and its habits, and will tell the story of his games undiminished to his children and grandchildren after him, but has no need, that he knows of, of his declensions and conjugations, can make no use of them—in fact, does not know what they mean.

He can make and fly a kite, and does not soon tire of the pursuit; but can not follow those old French and Portuguese adventurers, whose names he can not pronounce, and knows nothing of the seas and lands they visited, and can not remember them over a Christmas, to say nothing of a summer vacation.

He is told that a certain word is an adverb, but would be just as well satisfied and unquestioning to hear it called a preposition or a conjunction.

And how this indistinctness and uncertainty clings to later life till the whole subject seems but an incongruous muddle, and the books written upon it fit food for a bonfire!

Still, there is a grammar, a correct understanding and use of language, with names and terms enough for intelligent study, and it is fast finding its way into our schools;

but it is the study of the language as found in good use, and not of misunderstood definitions—a learning to swim on dry land.

These early acquisitions, like most of the studies of the school, are for use, and are, or should be, studied for their own value—little time is there in the public school for the study of those things not worth the knowing—that intelligent knowledge that can be used directly or as a means to other attainments.

If we learn to do by the doing, we learn also to learn by the learning, and the best test of our methods of investigation and learning is the value of the knowledge we have learned or discovered.

We are successful in our endless search for truth, so far as we find or learn what is true. We have no call for that truth that is true of nothing any more than for that goodness that is good for nothing, and the best mental discipline is promoted, with the consequent growth and development, as our powers are intelligently employed in the pursuit of whatever shall add to our valuable knowledge and highest wisdom.

Of history, if rightly studied, of geography—descriptive, physical, mathematical, and political—there can be no valid question of their value; nor any more, it would seem, of mathematics—number, form, size; nor of the sciences—some knowledge, and correct knowledge, of those things around us and within us, upon the sight, understanding, and use of which our own physical, mental, and moral well-being depends, with our highest health and happiness.

Even growth is but another name for a greater capacity for knowing and the power to satisfy that capacity. The perfect man must be not only the ready, but the full, the correct man. In making the man first and the

merchant afterward, we are apt to get a worthless man and an unskillful, useless merchant. We would make the man in making the merchant—the broad, liberal, enterprising, upright, cultured, manly merchant, merchant prince, or princess, if she will.

The empty, unfurnished developments are so apt to collapse just when their fullness is needed. It is not the bare fact, or rather the veriest shadow of a fact, the insignificant word, to be repeated to-day and forgotten to-morrow, that constitutes knowledge or intelligence. To learn that the capital of England is London, if the word be all, gives no information — any other name would do as well, as Bagdad or Tadmor in the wilderness; or to learn that there are thirty-eight States, without knowing what a State is, as ready to give Canada or Chicago as Illinois.

Our geographies, as it seems to me, begin where they should leave off. To the average beginner the reasons for supposing the earth to be round—the approaching ship, the shadow of the earth in an eclipse—can serve no other purpose than a more or less complete obscuration of his mental powers, in many cases never passing off, and even the circumference of the earth in miles might often as well be called feet or rods. We should begin with our familiar surroundings, till direction, extent, number have become a part of ourselves, never to be forgotten; then outward to the city, the county, the State, with some knowledge of the nature and purpose of a city or State and the causes that conspire to make cities. From lack of steam alone fifty years ago Chicago was an impossibility beside our sluggish stream.

As with names of places, so with disconnected, unassociated events of history. From the painful expansion of the pupil's task by the doings of our civil war some

useful return should come. As for the text, that General Jones defeated General Smith, with so many killed and so many captured, if it end there, he might as well have bowled down so many pins or pocketed so many balls. But there were certain great movements for specific purposes, of which these numerous engagements were but mere incidentals. There were reputations justly and unjustly lost and won ; and captures, of which the cost of the captured mules was not the only thing to be mourned.

In truth, our whole war was itself but one chapter of the story of the great conflict of slavery coexistent with our Government, and can not be intelligently understood without that continuous record in mind. Instead of slavery, perhaps we might better call it the growth of liberty which began the trouble. Vices are always conservative ; they do not desire reform.

What matters it, too, to know that Adams and Jackson were Presidents at such and such a date while ignorant of the great political ideas forever at war in our history and more or less faithfully represented by the parties that have from time to time combined and again dissolved ?

Again, our financial history might form an interesting and fruitful topic for study and discussion for the older pupils.

It is wonderful the fruitfulness of a single, well-learned, thoroughly comprehended idea, though of no more account than the mustard-seed, that "smallest of all seeds." But it must be a live idea and well grasped in a fruitful soil. Through one well-defined fact, as through a crystal lens, how all related facts come out clear and distinct beneath our steady gaze ! The seasons and the zones, the extent of the zones and all their relations, need not be

studied and remembered if once the cause be clearly understood. Even for definite knowledge, from the simple $23\frac{1}{2}°$ in the tipping of the earth, they all flow naturally and easily, with but a question in arithmetic not beyond the primary pupil to give the extent in miles if need be.

The government of our city once intelligently known gives the essentials of all our State and national governments, with a little enlargement of the picture by imagination.

When the construction of the Hoosac Tunnel was under discussion, the venerable Dr. Hitchcock was called before a committee of the Massachusetts Legislature to testify as to the internal structure of the mountain. After making his statement in his simple manner, one of the doubtful members asked how he knew. Reaching his hand down into the pocket of his old fur-collared camlet overcoat, he brought up from its depths two or three small fragments of rock from the top or side of the mountain, with the confident remark: "Why, here they are; see for yourself."

Unlike a distinguished lawyer, a member of the Senate about the same time, who, after an official inspection of some locomotive engines at the shops, innocently, with a graceful wave of the hand, inquired, "Ah, do these go by water?"

The lawyer had had the better training and would have made the better speech. The difference was chiefly of information. One had studied for the sake of the knowledge and its natural deductions, the other for mental training and growth.

One who has a complete knowledge of numbers from one to ten, or at most to forty or fifty—not in metaphysical distinctions, but in a simple, clear understanding of the thing itself—has little more to learn for the require-

ments of ordinary business save a few modes of application and the acquirement of a ready facility and accuracy by practice.

When our books, or our schools, shall rid themselves of the cloud of witnesses to the efforts of book-makers to surpass each other, as seen in the multiplicity of useless terms—as causes and results, bases and effects, and I know not how many more—will the distressing subject of percentage stand forth clear and radiant in its various applications as a rich landscape after a clearing shower.

We desire our pupils to begin the study of numbers with the blocks, the buttons, the cards in their hand, botany with the blossom, the plant, and geology with the hammer, rather than the book—because thus only do they get the primary words, the alphabet, to understand the book with its definitions and descriptions—that they may not always toil along the same laborious ways that others have trodden with many an error and many a fall, but that with the lessons of others' experience to guide them they may quickly and more easily possess themselves of the land already discovered, and perhaps press on to new fields and broader conquests. Thus only is it possible that

> . . . through the ages one increasing purpose runs,
> And the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns.

In the shop, too, the definitions of geometry, mechanics, and physics can be learned with a value the textbook can never give. From the table, the work-bench, and the forge, comes a living, fruitful meaning, with a fullness beside which the explanations of the book alone would be but withered shreds.

The study of language, of grammar, too—for, as I have said, there is a grammar of the English language,

even in default of the accident of inflection, a study that teaches to speak and write correctly—this, too, in its beginnings, like numbers and science, should be objective, the study of the language as it is found in good use by authors, and its correct and ready employment in expressing the thought of the student. Nor till a considerable familiarity with its structure and spirit is attained is the pupil prepared to formulate and define, that work of the advanced and skillful student.

And instead of testing his progress by defining properties and repeating tables and columns, let him be asked, if you please, to give a good description of the room he is in (or take some like familiar topic), a reliable and approved method of examination, showing both what he has learned and what he can do with it. An examination may or may not ascertain the pupil's acquirements and power, and so may the daily recitation.

It is not difficult to suppose a recitation so conducted that a perfect record would afford little or no proof of any valuable knowledge gained or power acquired which would be available for future use. In this connection I would suggest that the practice sometimes observed of giving five or ten minutes for studying a lesson in spelling, history, or any branch of study in immediate preparation for recitation is injurious, and only injurious, and in its tendency ruinous to that retentive memory, without which the highest success is impossible with the scholar, the teacher, the business man, or the politician.

A few minutes given to quiet thought, for recalling the important points of a subject previously studied, but thought without reference to the book, would cultivate a kind of memory of the first importance—one of the most efficient factors in all growth and progress.

And even in the grammar grades may our pupils ex-

tend their knowledge to the common figures of speech as found in the authors read, so as to appreciate their beauty and force, and to employ their familiar names of simile and metaphor, and to make a fitting use of them in their own writings and speaking.

For its value to themselves they should know what constitutes verse, and what poetry and rhyme, and be acquainted with the common forms of verse so well as almost without an effort to apprehend the delicate rhythmic movement, in true enjoyment of the fitness of this or that form for its special use—an acquisition as easy, as pleasing as song.

And *I* would not discourage the young, half-fledged soul from trying its light pinions in airy, tuneful flight, nor mock the weak attempt. A sorry swain is he who never feels his fond heart swell with airy nothings, to which he fain would give a local habitation and a name. The form that is always content to creep is but a reptile, and dust, by just decree, his food. Even Tennyson's early lines would not have kept Alcibiades awake.

With all our science and art, the good things of life are not all material. The marble column, the rounded dome, the frescoed wall, have no meaning or form to the untaught mind. In the richer thought, the more graceful expression, the sweeter melody of a truer, purer literature, the foundation and adornment of the modern home, is found their only right to be; and the effort of the young soul toward the attainment and use of the best within its reach is well deserving of encouragement.

In the oft-quoted line, "The curfew tolls the knell of parting day," is found more of history, more of political, of social science, more of poetry, of language, than the majority of our graduates take with them from the grammar or high school—a statement in which I believe

I do the wisest of you no wrong. Very much of this most valuable information may be secured, with a wise teacher, incidentally and almost unconsciously, in a way that, far from interrupting the stated work, only seems to give it a new, a real interest and life.

Yet so apt is any useful method or new invention to be regarded, like a new mineral water, as the panacea for all ills, and praised beyond its true use, that our graded system, with all its power for good, has often been so straightened and narrowed that the mind and heart, that the whole nature of the pupil and the teacher has been cramped and stifled within its ever-tightening and benumbing grasp.

In utter neglect or forgetfulness of securing what is already gained, and of introducing into each grade some principles of each preceding grade in some new relation, that nothing be lost, a line of demarkation and exclusion between the different grades has been drawn more rigid and more rigidly enforced than the cholera quarantine of Europe.

Subtraction has been neglected in the pursuit of multiplication, and arithmetic has been buried beneath the unknown quantities of algebra. On the portals to any information not outlined for the particular grade has been posted the red or yellow sign of contagion—contagion of intelligence not needed in that grade.

And, finally, so brief is the life of school at best, and so little its achievements, that our highest aim should be to create a hunger and thirst for all true knowledge, to inspire a love of all useful learning, ever looking with the hope, the faith of childhood, nay, with the assurance of manhood, to the fulfillment of that noblest reward of our efforts, when we shall no longer see, as through a glass darkly, but then shall see face to face; when no

more shall we know, as now, but in part, but in the highest presence shall know, even as we are known.

VI.

THE TEACHER IN THE SCHOOL-ROOM.

In this work of ours, whatever be the theories we may evolve or the methods we devise, the result is to be wrought out in the school-room. In the school-room is to be found the test of their worth, the truth or untruth of our philosophies. In the quiet study, indeed, must the facts and suggestions of life be deeply conned and considered, old systems changed and new ones formed; but in the school-room are best studied those nerve-centers of educational life whence our richest experiences are to be drawn and where our best laid plans are to meet their condemnation or reward.

It is not the recluse with his abstruse thought and pure reason, nor the philosopher with his broad generalizations and logical deductions, nor yet the statistician with his cold columns of recorded data, who is to work out the true problem of school-life, but by the keenly observant, thoughtful teacher in the school-room, in closest relations and deep sympathy with the living child in his eagerness and restlessness, his waywardness and trustfulness, are to be studied the changeful phenomena whose true apprehension shall give him assurance of success.

Noble as our work is accounted, and assuredly should be, yet it consists largely of little things. No great events or glaring deeds are to herald the good teacher's success and urge him on to renewed efforts, nor has he

the ready means by which to judge of the results. The farmer may measure his products, the merchant sum up his profits or his losses, and the broker count his gains, but how little can we see at the close of the day or the week of our work! We have compassed so many lines, so many pages, it may be, but what has been done for the pupil's growth, the development of his powers, for his integrity or his real intelligence, what toward giving him a true direction in life? A large faith, a great hope, a faith in childhood, a hope and trust in earnest, faithful, well-directed effort, an enduring love of the service, must be the essentials of the deserving teacher, the first elements of fitness for the school-room.

With what joy and pride and sometimes awe does the little six-year-old make preparations for his first day in school! It is the goal on which for weary days his swelling heart has been fixed. Morning after morning has he anxiously stood to see his older companions pass in noisy groups and turned tearfully away with the feeling that the sluggish hour would never come; and now he, too, with his new shoes, perhaps, and mended coat, is to enter that mysterious portal. And there at the threshold, like a fairy princess, should stand the sympathetic teacher, with smiling welcome to receive him, to crown his hopes with her sweet confidence and kindly care, and assign him his seat, the throne of his childish ambition, and his desk, the banqueting-table of his curious and wondering heart.

Fortunate, indeed, is the pupil on whom this new life shall never pall, and favored with the choicest gifts the teacher who shall give to this new relationship an ever stronger and more enduring bond, that when the strangeness, the novelty shall pass away, it shall give place to an attractive charm, that for the welcoming fairy, by a sweet

transformation, shall now stand the kind friend, the wise counselor, the trusted guide, the respected teacher. The needful restraint of the school must be relieved by its cheerful enforcement, the tiresome monotony enlivened by a pleasing variety, the eager curiosity preserved by presenting ever something fresh and new, something to discover and learn.

For his activities new channels must be opened, something given him to do, to represent, to make, that in place of those weary hours of enforced silence and dull quietude we may find the pleasing signs of orderly life, of directed energies, and well regulated growth. Though the school-house is not a play-house, nor school-life play, it may be none the less enjoyable. Excellence in government is no longer measured by the test of folded hands and slumbrous stillness. The change from home-life to school-life is great enough at best, and the first requisite of the teacher is the power so to control and guide the pupils along the paths of learning, so to place before them objects of interest and usefulness that the unthinking joy of their entrance upon school-life shall change, with their expanding powers and clearer aims, into the deeper satisfactions and more earnest thoughtfulness of a wiser intelligence and larger nature, that our pupils, instead of dropping away disheartened one by one, like the deserters from an unsuccessful army, may with courage kindled to enthusiasm advance to each new grade or study with the ardor of assured victors. Even were the school but an agreeable resort for the child, where he might be watched and tenderly cared for, safe from the evil influences of the street during the parents' busy hours of toil, it would not be wholly in vain; but he is here for a still higher purpose, as was just suggested. He is here to be instructed, educated, lifted to a wider

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intelligence, with firmer purposes and truer aims. He has thus far been trying and learning of his powers of body and mind and familiarizing himself with his surroundings, as chance or desire has led him on, turning from this to that, from plaything to pet, from pet to floating butterfly, beginning some plan only to leave it for something else, as his varying mood or heedless impulse has directed.

Now must he learn to study things more closely and consecutively, to pursue some plan more persistently—take reason in place of whim for a guide. He must learn to submit to the leadings of others in those untried paths where his untaught steps would carry him astray. Now, little by little, must he learn the power of well-directed, continuous effort, resisting the call of pleasure or passion to draw him aside. Now, too, must he begin to learn what others have said and done, and how the record has been made and preserved, and how to record his own thoughts and experiences—that marvelous art by which the deepest thought, the most delicate sentiment, the highest truths and most profound philosophies, may be spread out in visible form and made our own.

Within what a narrow circle would our lives be run were we shut up to the paltry measure of our own seeing and doing! The key to a wisdom, power, and intelligence beyond the accomplishment of centuries by their own unaided doings has the child who can read understandingly "This is a man."

For this work a teacher can hardly be too well prepared. How often are we reminded that no great amount of scholarship is needed to teach the first reader and instruct in number from one to ten! But it is not the mere calling of words or the summing up of twos and threes with which she has to do.

Even here the clear enunciation, the easy utterance, the pleasing tone, the unaffected grace of the pupil, will appear only as the reflection of these in the well-trained, well-informed, cultivated teacher. Even here in the earlier grades, and perhaps here more especially, a familiar knowledge of both physical and mental physiology is needed—a ready knowledge of the right uses of the various powers of body and mind, and the laws of their growth and development, and by what slight causes they may be distorted, and their healthful unfolding arrested or retarded. A recognition of the diversity of mental and moral as of physical features should belong to him who makes teaching his special work.

In the physical world, the earth, the rock, the tree, the plant, the flower, the fruit, the beast, the bird, the fish—what illustrative material is found for the lower as well as the higher grades, combining the sweetest pleasure with the highest use! Surely the elements of geology, botany, and zoölogy are not beyond the teacher's needs.

And what a power from the first to the last has she who has at her command the graphic art, the use of crayon and pencil!

Not as an ornamental branch, a pretty accomplishment, does it come to the school-room, but as an essential part of all good work, enchaining the almost infant mind, illuming the pages of history and geography, and making the study of the sciences a possibility.

We talk much and often of the study of the child-nature, its powers and its susceptibilities, but this is no new study; it has claimed the attention and commanded the best thought of sage and philosopher, and little advance will he make who comes to the consideration of the child-life with no knowledge of results already reached.

"There were kings in Greece before Agamemnon." As well might the student in astronomy disregard all the past, and begin anew the old star-gazing of Chaldea, without even the aid of smoked glass, as the young teacher turn from the writings of those who have made teacher and teaching a life-study. Phenomenal as the first child is in a young household, the pupil at school is not like a new comet, whose elements must all be calculated anew. Rarely does a disease appear or accident occur whose like is not recorded in the books.

One who has never taught learns little from visiting another's school in comparison with him who there sees his own errors in a new light, and finds methods and devices for which he has sought in vain, and which he may put to a wiser use in increasing his own efficiency and worth.

And without a familiar acquaintance with the studies and results of some of the past leaders of thought and adepts in practice, poor and unfruitful will be the young and unskilled teacher's explorations into the mysteries of the child-nature. Errors have been made which need not be repeated; methods tried and found wanting which have no present place, save in the museum of the antiquary.

But with the well-studied chart of past experience and the compass of well-established principles before him, with a watchful and discerning eye and a firm and steady hand, may the true pilot bring his craft with its precious freight through changeful seas, 'neath varying skies, past sunken rocks and treacherous sands, to the safe harbor of the destined port.

And, perhaps, no period of our history has been more keenly alive to the importance of right aims and means, or been richer in wholesome result, than the present.

These daily records have not many of them yet reached the formal volume, and are to be found only in the intelligent journal and thoughtful magazine, not to be ignored by him who would be in the line of present progress.

But it is not every new method that is to be adopted before putting it to the proof. People in haste to descry the new prophet may cry, "Lo, here!" or "Lo, there!" but the end is not yet. Prove all things intelligently, and from the poorest teacher we may often derive aid and valuable assistance.

It is at least curious, if not instructive, to study the lives of educational reformers. How many of us are familiar with the life and work of Pestalozzi, the father of object lessons and language work, the two great ideas of to-day? No more unpractical man, perhaps, ever lived. At school he was "dubbed Harry Oddity, of Foolborough," and school-boys often show an instinct before which the wisdom of age may bow in lowly reverence. After trying a profession and business with no success, he turned to school-keeping, and it is perhaps well to note how often an utter unfitness for any other calling is regarded as conclusive evidence of a call as teacher.

The history of education presents no more lamentable failure than his. Never could he keep a school together for a year.

After a score of years of poverty and despondency, he wrote, among other things, a novel, upon which his reputation depends. Other things he wrote of no worth, and again was driven to the last resort of teaching, but to no other purpose than to prove, as he himself says, "his unrivaled incapacity to govern."

Nor was Froebel much better. His prime idea of

"the spontaneity of the child" could hardly lead to any end but confusion and failure. And yet from these wrecks have been saved some of the most fruitful theories of to-day, gathered and systematized by more practical workers.

But educational works are not the only or, it may be, the most important part of a teacher's outfit. A wider culture must he seek who would most benefit his pupils. Narrow, indeed, must be the study, the thought, the heart of him who goes not beyond the dry and beaten path of text-book and school literature.

Text-books are but mere guide-posts, pointing the way to the inexperienced teacher, but giving little knowledge of the wood, the field, the country through which he passes; or, changing the figure, they are but skeletons, suggestive of what might have been, but leaving us as ignorant as before of the life and character, the work and worth, of him whom they had upborne. Little has he of grammar, of language, who, planting himself upon the text-book, is not read, and well read, in the works of those who are skillful in its use, familiar with their nice expression, their delicate shading of thought, and their clear and distinct utterances.

In the reading circles that to-day are forming all through the land, as I look over the lists of books, I seem to see too much of this narrowing tendency of our work, too much mere text-book study. Better, it seems to me, would be the little gathering or club whose members should meet to study Longfellow or Tennyson, Hawthorne or Shakespeare, Motley or Green, comparing thought with thought, exciting by the attrition of mind with mind a living magnetism, through whose influence life should be infused into the otherwise dead forms of expression.

School-life, unless thus enlivened and broadened by literature and science, by mental contact, is a narrowing life, as that life must be that forever closes in and in upon itself, busy always with minds narrower and weaker than its own.

I have dwelt thus upon the qualifications of the teacher because here, as it seems to me, lies the strength, the hope of our schools. If we are to throw off the belittling bondage of text-book, and reduce it to its proper place as a ready aid and suggestive guide to our pupils, we must, by a wider range and a larger comprehension, possess ourselves of the subjects; we must clothe the skeleton with muscle and nerve, and breathe into it the breath of life.

If we would teach our pupils to examine thoughtfully, to collate, compare, and judiciously decide, we must give them an opportunity to present their views, discussing with them their conclusions, meeting their criticisms and wrong deductions, not by our mere arbitrary dicta, but by more convincing arguments, wise enough, too, to confess our own errors when in fault, without attempts at unworthy subterfuge or feeling of humiliation.

Very little of the logic of mathematics does a class receive from a teacher with whom a key is a necessity.

This earnest, vigorous thought, this honest endeavor, the tracing of the relations of causes and results, induces a love of truth and right which we call virtue—the integrity of purpose which we call character. Thoughtless submission to unsupported authority is not character, nor heedless innocence, of necessity, morality. It consists rather in duty known and performed, that which is due to ourselves, as thinking beings, and to our fellows; and with this knowledge and performance on the part of our pupils the teacher has much to do.

The larger thought and broader culture is needed to burst the wrappings of that ignorant self-conceit, whose ever-thickening and hardening folds withhold the growth and crush the life out of the tender germs of all that is generous and good, leaving us, as literature has been so fond of representing, but withered, crackling husks, with little within but dust and fruitlessness.

But not with the entrance upon the teacher's life in the school, with certificate signed and secured, is this preparation to end. Most of our teachers enter upon the work at too early an age to have had any extended reading or careful study beyond the requirements of the classroom.

Every day should add something new to the outfit of the teacher. From the first day with the primary grade to the last of the high-school or the college the teacher who would succeed can not safely neglect special preparation for the day's work, ever seeking for some means for securing a closer sympathy with his pupils, some way of presenting the subject more naturally and more efficiently, some new illustration, some truer aim, some higher motive.

And with every day and every exercise should he enter upon his work with a distinct and clearly defined purpose, a full comprehension of what he designs to accomplish, a comprehension of the pupil's past achievements, and the true relation of his present performance to his future progress. He is not merely to adapt himself and his teachings to the chance mood or caprice of the pupils, but thoughtfully and skillfully to control their undisciplined, untamed thought, and lead it almost unconsciously into the well-considered and directed channel of his own purposes.

Were the spontaneity of the child alone to be consid-

ered, he had better have remained at home teazing the cat, impaling the fly, or digging in the sand.

If to-day is frittered away in aimless effort, there is no basis for the work of to-morrow, and the morrow finds teacher and pupils all adrift upon an unknown sea, the bearings lost, the log untried, their bark forced far from her true course by unseen currents, with no approach to the desired haven.

This fixedness of purpose, this definite aim in the teacher, can hardly be too strongly urged—this making each day's work but a stepping-stone to the work of the next. Disconnected facts are of little avail in education. There is a logic of events, as of life, and it is only in their true relation that many of the incidents of life and of history are important.

Illustration and embellishment are valuable only as they awaken a new interest, fix the attention, and bring out more clearly the points under consideration. Only the philosopher can wholly discard them and deal with plain, unadorned expression of pure thought and reason. But how often are the illustrations allowed, and by the more scholarly, too, to divert the mind of the pupil from the real object of thought, distracting his attention, and obscuring that clearness of mental vision which should be the aim of all our endeavor.

I recall an exercise in reading in which Naples was incidentally introduced. This suggested its beautiful bay and the neighboring volcano. What more natural than to recall the exhumation of that old Pompeian vice, question following question, leading to the excavations at old Troy and the reality of the Trojan war and the personality of Homer. Whether Shakespeare and the authorship of his plays and sonnets were to follow, the brevity of time and this life would not permit me to learn.

But I had heard no reading. Perhaps some thought had been started, some information gained, some pleasure afforded, but it had not been a reading-lesson; the information was all desultory and ineffective; the thought, as I felt, had been squandered, the reason enfeebled, the whole purpose of the exercise missed, for which sad results the doubtful pleasure could be but a sorry compensation. Might they not as well have been observing the changing pictures of the kaleidoscope, with as fair a prospect of any worthy results either of discipline or intelligence?

In the treatment of any given topic by the author, on every page there is much that is comparatively unimportant, much whose importance depends upon the comprehension of the pupil. It is the essentials that should be made clear and indelible, and, if these are thoroughly grasped, the explanations and illustrations may well be lightly passed.

With a definite purpose in the mind of the teacher, and the desire, too, to induce the habit and the power of connected, logical thought in the pupil, the same event may often be considered from different points, and in its relation to different subjects.

The character of an administration may be studied in its bearing upon our foreign relations, with regard to our internal policy, or with reference to the relations of the different States, requiring in each case its peculiar collocation of acts and events, with varying importance assigned to the same act or measure.

One of the great objections to *memoriter* recitations is that they leave the relative importance of facts and events entirely out of view, giving as much emphasis to the scarlet and purple of Sir Edmund Andrus as to the skirmish at Lexington or the surrender at Yorktown.

And even a topical study and recitation from the same long list of topics upon the blackboard for each and every State and country is open to the same objection, the Thames, with the wealth of the world upon its bosom, hardly taking rank above some trout stream in Wisconsin, and the Lake of the Woods rivaling Lake Michigan.

In answer to a request in a late teachers' examination to give four or five of the more important commercial rivers of Europe, the Thames and the Seine had rare mention in comparison with some unpronounceable, unheard-of streams in the frozen regions of Russia.

Pupils should early in these studies be taught themselves to distinguish the important features of the State, passing some with little more than a courteous nod of recognition, and dwelling upon others with careful and thoughtful investigation. In the early colonial settlement of this country hardly more than two or three have any special bearing upon our national development and character.

Nor can there be a more fatal mistake, I think, than to feel that every subject must be exhausted before advancing to the next. Few are the topics even in the lower grades that can be considered in all their details. There are in numbers from one to ten many points that demand a well-trained intellect, a nice discrimination, a familiarity with some of the higher mathematics to discuss satisfactorily—points on which the keenest intellects may still whet their sharpest thought, points whose consideration is futile, if not confusing, to the children who can not give the sum of three and four without counting.

To the child the half of four quarters is as simple as the half of four wholes, and it is as easy to count quarters as wholes, by twos and threes, without troubling them too long with the distinction of division and separa-

tion, the question of dividing fractions by whole numbers, *et id omne genus*, which may be safely left to mathematical experts and normal teachers for the diversion of their long winter evenings, over the fragrant coffee and toothsome cake.

Many are the topics of the early grades to which the advanced teacher should sometimes revert when the fitting time comes round, when the higher principles and broader generalizations will throw a flood of light into many an obscure corner.

It is important, too, that the teacher even of the first grades should be familiar with subjects that are to come later, some in the grammar, some in the high school, that she may so shape her instruction that nothing be taught which the learned high-school teacher shall feel called upon to deny. Even in planting the seed it is well to know whether it be designed to produce a beanstalk or an oak, and whether the sprouting germ will first push its blade or its root to the light. In this view, too, the value of reviews becomes more distinct and pronounced in bringing out the strong, the essential points of the subject, and fixing them in the memory, in seeing the several topics in their right relations as parts of one connected whole, unobscured by many a suggestion and explanation, which had been introduced simply as aids to the right understanding of the subject, or as stagings for the builders which must needs be removed before the temple can be seen in its symmetry and its beauty. A review is a far different thing from an ordinary daily recitation, calling into exercise different powers and fraught with higher results; and reviews themselves should be varied, now consisting of little more than a concise analysis, and again tracing more closely the true line of the argument or discussion. A review of the previous lesson

should be considered as much a part of the daily recitation as the parts assigned in advance; and the custom of some of employing the last few minutes of an exercise in gathering up the important thoughts of the lesson just recited is by no means an unfruitful one.

After a careful, critical examination of a page in Latin, in which for purposes of construction or comparison of idioms the text has been followed too closely for elegance, how can the work be better completed than by calling upon some two or three to give a simple, uninterrupted translation in genuine idiomatic English, with a due observance of the points so critically discussed at the first rendering?

How slight the task, too, in the higher grade, with its greater maturity and larger grasp, to comprehend some difficulties of a topic over which the most thoughtful and laborious effort of teacher and pupil would have been in vain two or three years earlier where the subject was outlined in the graded course!

And if we would awaken or preserve the enthusiasm, quicken the interest, and secure the attention of our pupils, there must be progression in our work. Each new lesson must present something new and interesting, something worth knowing. No mere humdrum of familiar facts, with endless and listless repetition, till the pupils, and sometimes the teachers, lose sight of the very meaning of the words and formulas repeated will suffice. Not a line should be gone over without something to stimulate inquiry and call forth new and more strenuous effort, something whose successful accomplishment shall give a deeper joy, a fuller satisfaction. Each morning should the pupil feel that a discovery awaits him, drawing him resistlessly to school, wondering within himself that nine o'clock comes so late. I have known such schools and

seen such pupils, the product of such teachers. It would seem that a little thought in this direction would clear up the foggy atmosphere hanging gloomily over the much-mooted subject of grammar and parsing.

It is not the technical character of the subject that is objected to. All science to be of worth must be technical, must be accurate, with well-defined terms, or all discussion will be worthless and investigation vain. It is the dreary, fruitless routine that should be avoided, and the arbitrary, unmeaning terms.

Where is the child of ten years who does not know that hat is singular if he knows the meaning of singular, a *single* thing; that man is masculine; that book is of the third person, though just how and when it became a *person* at all might perplex him a little at first? The earlier lesson, why *I* should be of the first person, *you* of the second, and *he* of the third, might well employ a few minutes for clear apprehension. It may be necessary to call their attention to the fact that the thing *hat* is not a noun at all, though the want of that might not appreciably affect his success in life.

But this parsing is what is incomprehensible. Why not adopt the same process in the other branches? Why not in geography, for example, require the form: Chicago is a city. *Rule:* A city is a collective body of inhabitants incorporated and governed by a mayor and aldermen. It has so many inhabitants. *Rule:* Inhabitants are the people who live in the city. *Exception:* Most people live in the country. It is situated on Lake Michigan. *Rule:* A lake is a body of fresh water larger than a pond. *Exception:* Some lakes are salt. *Exception second:* Some ponds are larger than some lakes. Shopping is mostly done by women. *Rule:* Woman is a complex, limiting modifier of the first class. *Excep-*

tion: Some women are school-teachers. *Remark:* Many persons have no limiting modifiers. *Remark second:* Such persons are sometimes called independent cases. And so on through the cities of the State and country.

This may and probably does seem idle twaddle; but it is no exaggeration of what we are daily doing in our classes in grammar and parsing.

And then, too, the rules which we force into the unwilling minds. "An article modifies the noun which it limits." For instance, "A boy plays." In what way is boy modified? What do we know of his age, size, or disposition? It is bad enough to say that an article limits, for in this case it removes all limits, making it the universal boy. Again, "A verb agrees with its subject in number and person." "I wrote, you wrote, he wrote; we wrote, you wrote, they wrote." A most *agreeable* collection of verbal forms, surely. Can it greatly serve to cultivate an accurate, critical habit of thought? And, as if this were not enough, the pupil must "by hook or crook" learn to diagram it upon the blackboard; but such expressions as "I done it," "He has never went to any other school," "I hain't got no pen," will all yield sweet subservience to the demands of the links and kinks of diagramming. What endless, useless repetition, too, is required in going through a paragraph when perhaps but a single word or two merit any attention! Whatever thought there is must precede the analysis, while the diagram gives little evidence of a correct understanding.

Notice the familiar lines:

> The curfew tolls the knell of parting day.

Plain and simple. As plain as can be; not an obscurity or an inversion; nothing simpler.

The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea.

So:

The plowman homeward plods his weary way.

And so, too:

And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

There is nothing of grammar to warrant a moment's attention of the pupil ready to appreciate the poem. Let him rather consider the origin of the curfew, and the conditions making such a precaution necessary; the total loss of the first meaning, since the cows are but just coming home; the nice use of "*parting*," not "*departing*," in connection with the dying day; the *lowing* herd; *wind*, not *winds*, as some of the books have it, in long line to the milking; the alliteration in plowman plods and weary way.

What pretty subjects, too, for descriptive composition here! What a pleasing variety would be furnished by the pupils according to their mental pictures!

A due regard for the essentials of thought will do much to promote good reading, and without it there can be no good reading or speaking, whatever the elocutionary power or dramatic art exhibited. For example:

Within this lowly grave a *conqueror* lies—

—not a beggar—

And yet the *monument* proclaims it not.

—i. e., there is no monument, save a simple headstone—

Nor round the sleeper's name hath *chisel* wrought—

—no sculpture there—

A simple *name* alone.

Nothing but the name; no title. Nor was it a *simple* name—the good, honored name of "Sarah."

Again :

With *love* she conquered hate—

—not with hate, as is often done—

And overcame evil with *good*—

—not evil—

In her great *Master's* name—

—trusting not in her own strength, but his.

There is no need here of inquiry as to the reader's understanding of the thought. It has been already answered before the asking by the expression given in the reading, and whether just like your own does not matter so much.

Correct expression must come, if at all, from intelligent, definite thought, producing a picture upon the mental or spiritual sensorium as distinct and as readily recognized as the features of a familiar friend. And if we would give to language its true value, and render it an efficient instrument of clear, discriminating study and thought, then must each new word, as it comes up, be clearly apprehended. From the first grade to the last must the subject under consideration be made visible, as it were, to the young mind, that when afterward he shall meet with it in study or familiar use, no dimness shall obscure the thought or present it to him in vague and shadowy outline.

Whether it be strictly true or not, as Plato has it, that all vision is reminiscence, there can be little doubt that, if we would trace back to the origin of our ideas, the elements of most of our mental resources, we should find they came to us through the agency of sense and sensible objects. Small use in speaking of ice to the untaught dweller of the tropics.

From the object to the word, from the concrete to the

abstract, seems to be the true order; and as the young pupil takes the paper, the sticks, the clay, the cube, the sphere, the plant, the mineral, handles them, feels, sees, examines them, before he deals much in verbal definition or long description, so should it be, I think, with much of the illustrative apparatus, mechanical and physical, in the higher grades.

Instead of bringing out the electrical machine, the model engine, the manikin, at the close of the week or month, as was the practice of our old professors after the study of the subject was completed, for the exhibition of the professor's learning or his deftness in manipulation, they should be accessible to the student from the outset. The valve, the piston, the coil should be before him, be in his hands, with the book as an assistant, a reference. What profit in learning from the printed page the description of the air-pump by the pupil who has never seen its structure and workings! Once and again have I seen a class sent with biting censure to their seats for not defining what had no shape or place in their minds, of which no reminiscence could assist the vision.

And withal, as a delicate perfume, pervading the whole life of the school-room, should be the quiet but firm spirit of persuasive control; first of all, control of self, which is of itself a power over others, giving that air of calm confidence which is of the very essence of persuasion. Little persuasive power resides in the fretful, worrying soul.

"When will you take Vicksburg?" was the taunting rebel inquiry of Grant, as he sat down, like a double-faced Janus, between those two opposing armies.

"I shall take Vicksburg, if it takes me thirty years," was his calm, persuasive answer.

A recent novel-writer makes the waiting-maid say of

her mistress, "She has an unfair advantage of me, for she never scolds." The scolding teacher is often the bad boy's sweetest opportunity, for he can always contrive to answer back, a chance he dearly loves and persistently labors for.

There is, indeed, a worthy indignation at wrong and injustice; but even to this the controlled expression, softened by sorrow for the untoward offender, often gives a twofold force and leaves no cause, in ill-advised words, for long regret. The harsh and rasping tone has no more place in the schoolroom than in the angelic choir.

And not below the teacher's regard, but cementing the very foundations of her influence, is the cheery "Good morning"; the quiet, grateful "Thank you" for the little favor or polite attention; the thoughtful "Excuse me" for the slight accident or some inadvertency; the glad recognition of well-earned success and sincere regret for failure; and the kindly "Good-night" at the school-day's close.

Far more potent than the formal lecture or the solemn homily are these little graceful recognitions of the pupils' rights to respect and gentle courtesy, and go far toward inducing in them those habits of considerate conduct whose fuller development into active principles savors at least of morality.

This cheerful, loving life that is breathing through our lower schools the cold critic and learned professor may scoff at or deny. Safely ensconced on their stern heights, this spring-tide of warmth and sunshine has not reached them. They look out upon the firm rock, hard and forbidding as of old; the dwarf pine and scrub hemlock wear their last winter's greenness; adown the mountain sides the giant old trees, with their withering foliage at half-mast over the sad approach of civilization, shut

from them the beauty of the wakened fields below, and their sighing branches drown the music of bursting buds and the unfolding of tender leaves which shall ere long fill our land with health and happiness.

In the character and conduct of the teacher is the strength and hope of the school; and then will our calling become a profession when we do professional work, and our profession be a noble one when we do its duties nobly.

VII.

HOW THE SCHOOL DEVELOPS CHARACTER.

Differ as we may in many matters, we are all agreed in effect that the one chief aim of school-life is character, and fortunately, or unfortunately, to this end, whether we will or not, we are all and always contributing.

It is only when we come to the ways and means for the informing and proper unfolding of a true character that our differences and discussions begin, sometimes these differences going down to the very foundations, the first principles of real education, and again resolving themselves into mere variances in the meaning and use of words.

We need not look long in Webster for the meaning of character, one of those terms understood by all, but so hard to define. The word, which we have from the Greeks, whose ideal was the perfect individual, meant first the point, the graver's tool; then the line, the distinguishing trait, the inner life of the man. The Roman, on the other hand, who, with his genius for organization, cared for the individual only in his relations to the

state, had only the superficial term *mores*, habits, customs, those practices alone which come within the cognizance of the community, the state.

We, who unite in our thought the individual with the citizen, enlarge our idea of character to include them both, believing that the worthy citizen can not be an unworthy man.

It is, perhaps, enough for us to consider that, from the very nature of the case, all character is mental, and that all development of character comes from mental training, from the *in*forming of the mind, and giving it those surroundings that favor its unfolding. The dog, indeed, in a restricted sense may be credited with a character, may be ugly or kind, and the horse gentle or vicious, but it is only as intellectual beings, capable of growth and progress, that we speak of the influence of our schools upon the formation of character.

From the defects of language we are often unconsciously led into the error of separating in our thought those things that are indissolubly connected, and to talk of character building as something different from the training, the disciplining of the mind, and to suppose that we can labor worthily for the unfolding and uplifting of the personal character and life, without that knowledge, that *in*-formation of the intellectual nature which alone places us above the brute, and makes us worthy of a place in the school-room in the capacity either of teacher or pupil.

The intellectual, industrial, social, and moral character of an individual, as we use the terms in our daily speech, are but different phases of the one and same mind in its workings and manifestations, as we speak of the form, the combination, the coloring, and the worth of a painting.

We are considering merely his knowledge and judgment, his likes and dislikes, his sense of obligation, or his power over his material belongings.

The simple elements of character are, it would seem, few in number but manifold in their combinations and applications, and in some measure are all early employed, though the period for the special cultivation and development of the different powers is a matter of the first importance.

Let us consider for a moment the early mental processes of the child. A word is uttered, he places his hand upon his mother's face. Simple sensations both, but giving no information, no knowledge. Again and again the tone, the touch. Memory now recalls the first sensation, notes the resemblances, and there follows the conscious perception. He hears, perceives other sounds unlike the first, and by imagination choosing the essentials of each, he has now a conception of sound, as we select the essentials of a leaf, yet thinking of no individual leaf, and we draw what we call a conventional leaf. With the conceptions multiplied, now can he begin to exercise his reason and judgment, begin to think clearly and consecutively.

With these powers in exercise, with their bright or dark blossoming, under the influence of a warm imagination, of likes and dislikes, hopes and fears, and the whole crowd of passions and desires, there is little more required to make up the life and character of most of us; and, according as they are directed or controlled for wise or unwise purposes, is the worth of our characters.

Little more is required, I said, and yet there remains the one faculty without which, with all our knowledge, we were little more, as regards power and influence, than the veriest puppets with which the skillful mechanic fills

the toy-stores—that one almost divine element of personal will to grasp or gather up any one or all of these, and wield them for the accomplishment of its chosen purpose.

Nor is it from text-book or rare and costly volume that the only or, it may be, the richest lessons are to be learned or the mental powers trained to their best or highest efficiency. Books are valued only as they contain the records and examples of the years that are gone, of the trials and successes, the efforts and the failures of men and women like ourselves, the legacy of their lives and their achievements, their thoughts and their imaginings. From the printed page alone are we the heirs of the ages, surrounded by the comforts and elegances, and possessed of the wisdom and the virtues of this latest and greatest of the centuries.

How to avail themselves of this rightful heritage, and take their true places in the forefront of the advancing column of enlightenment and noble purpose, is the first and still the last of the lessons due our pupils, to lead them at first by easy yet ever surer and more rapid steps, with keener desire and more elastic tread, with nicer discernment and wider vision toward those heights of transfiguration where they may commune face to face with the highest and the best.

Words should become to them in the well-wrought sentence as living things, each instinct with the life of the embodied thought, which should come to them clear and distinct in its wealth of wisdom or its beauty. Into fitly chosen and connected words, too, should they learn to breathe their own best and worthiest thought, making their sentences the living messengers of truth and ministers to the weary and needy heart of health and happiness.

Not without its influence upon integrity of character

and personal worthiness is this accuracy in the expression of thought in its delicate shadings and nicer meanings, for its utterance demanding the clearness of conception which springs from the accurate perception of the real and the true in nature and in life, at which much of the teaching of the school should aim. Things as they are, in their qualities and uses, to be found out but by the seeing and the handling, in the doing and the making, are the alphabet from which the thought and the feeling of a Longfellow or a Gladstone or even a Hegel are to be read. The pupil must know what is true and beautiful ere the conception of truth and beauty can dawn upon his mental vision, must learn of the good and the right if ever goodness and righteousness shall be to him more than empty words.

The teachings of history, the story of nations and individuals, the lessons of causes and results, the revelations of the material, the mental, and the spiritual world, if rightly read, are as true as—are, indeed, words of sacred writ, and can be studied with as reverent a spirit and with the probability of as little error in the translation.

The writings upon the rocks and the hieroglyphics of the heavens are as decipherable and as worthy of regard as those in the temples of Egypt or the palaces of Nineveh.

He who discovers a new truth or makes a new application of Nature's forces for the welfare of man has opened a sacred volume and found a new interpretation of a hitherto dark and hidden passage.

Truths and facts are not, of course, of equal worth, and a wise discernment is needful in separating the metal from the dross, the kernel from the chaff, or rather should we learn to choose now this, now that, as suited to our special purpose. Without the chaff there could be no

berry, without the dross no metal. But before us should be held, as a prime purpose, the cultivation of an intellectual integrity as the basis and condition of all moral and spiritual worth.

Without the early perception of material things there can be no worthy imaginings, no sound reasonings. The mother, watching the smile of the infant in the cradle, fondly deems that it is dreaming of the angels; but the angel is in the mother's heart alone. The child has had no perceptions, no imaginings, none of "the stuff that dreams are made of," and an angel is as far from his possibilities as a dream of Italy from the untaught Eskimos.

There can be no development or growth in the memorized repetition of another's words; no powers are called into action that constitute the elements of character. The phonograph can do as much with the addition of emphasis and intonation.

Nor is it in the desultory, haphazard learning of unconnected facts that we look for aught of value in training the pupil for a life of usefulness. Thought must be consecutive to be educative, if I may be allowed to coin a needed word, must be systematic, logical, or the knowledge gained has no *in*forming power. The knowledge that is worthy the name of *in*formation must give the learner the power and the principles that shall enable him to advance step by step from fixed facts to definite conclusions, to see things in a clearer, broader light, or the mind is not informed or enlightened.

We need, too, to place the pupils, as far as possible, upon their own responsibility. The school trains them to punctuality, order, system, and subordination, but too often affords them little opportunity for self-control, self-guidance, and self-help, more important to their well-being than most of the subjects taught from the books.

Their hours are arranged, their tasks assigned, the extent of their study and reading marked out, with little room for any plan, any design, any decision of their own —any effort in any self-chosen work.

And when the pupil steps from the graduation stage, in what direction is he to move? To whom is he to look? His tasks must now be assigned by himself; the extent of his efforts and the limits of his labors determined by his own judgment, with success or defeat dependent upon his ability to discern and meet the demand of the hour.

Hardly can we too strongly urge the need of cultivating more thoroughly that self-determining, self-directing power of a free, firm will—not that form of will, or rather dead stubbornness, which yields neither to persuasion nor argument, whose only power is found in resistance, but that faculty which can concentrate all needful energies to the performance of its chosen work.

I have no faith in the thought so often expressed, supported though it be by great names, that application is genius; but it is a grand element of success and, with a worthy aim, of usefulness, in both of which genius is often sadly lacking. With all our culture we do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles, nor will the most plodding dullard ever exhibit a spark of what we call genius. He breathes another atmosphere, and leads another life. His pathway may be bordered by the daisy and the dandelion, and his days be peace. Genius takes a loftier flight.

We should see to it that no narrowing, belittling motive be allowed to sway the minds and guide the efforts of the aspiring, earnest pupils, filling their young hearts with a restless, feverish desire for some paltry, worthless bauble of relative rank or position, withering the soul,

and ruinous alike to true scholarship and worthy character.

It is the love of good learning and the best modes of attaining it—the purposes of education—that are of more worth than any acquirements of the school-room, besides which the mere unintelligent knowledge there gained sinks into insignificance.

The school at best can give but the beginnings of a useful scholarship. Many of the best books are beyond the appreciation or enjoyment of school age, even if there were time for more than a sip at the perennial fountain. But a direction toward the sources of a true intellectual life can be given, a desire awakened for deeper and richer thoughts, and the spirit quickened, which shall not fail to impart guidance and strength for the realization of higher hopes and nobler characters.

Nor should we forget the physical part of our natures, especially in these later years, with the strong tendency of the richest life and keenest activities to the cities, filled as they are with their offices and palace stores.

It has long seemed to me a misfortune that during all the years of school-life our pupils could have nothing of the old farm and shop education of our early days, with the variety of employment which they gave—could have no productive industry.

Mere physical labor, the work of the brute, *may* be degrading, but the training of the mind to a better control of the hand, the ennobling of labor, of the rule of man over material things, from which spring so many of the blessings of our civilization—that ballasting of our thoughts and our otherwise unstable imagination by the substance and reality of fact—can not be passed by with a sneer and scornful smile.

Hand in hand with this intellectual life, and guided

by it, should proceed that moral life and development for which from my heart I believe that our public schools, with all their faults, are among the most efficient agencies, as they afford to the capable teacher the most favorable opportunities.

Though but a fraction of the pupil's time is passed beneath the teacher's care, yet the influence of him who is called to the care, the cure of minds and hearts, does not begin or end at the tinkling of the bell, but reaches out to the play-ground, the street, and into the very privacy of the home. The original fiber of the mental structure may not be changed nor the prime elements of character supplanted.

It is not character building with which the teacher has to do, but rather character development and training. We are not laying in this or that brick or block of marble, putting in this or that kind or quality of wood, but guiding and directing its growth, checking here a vicious tendency, and here encouraging a striving for the good, giving the active, aggressive powers a proper aim, and gradually inducing those habits of thought and action, that power of self-government that shall make him in school and out of school, and when school-days are over, a willing worker for good, trustworthy in social and business relations, submissive to rightful authority, true to his better self and to his neighbor, and reverencing truth, wherever found, as the writing of God's own finger, loyal ever and always to the right.

Not by the hand of stern repression, nor at the arbitrary will and power of superior force, is this task to be accomplished, but by the delicate, tender touch of a loving, sympathetic nature, by kindly, thoughtful control, kindness begetting trust, confidence inducing truthfulness, patience, self-control; the graceful recognition of

worthy effort imparting new strength to right impulse, and the living example of uprightness and honorable, generous feeling and dealing awakening the slumbering nature to the realization of a better, a worthier, a higher life.

With all our talking and teaching we do not yet rise, I believe, to the appreciation of the power for good of a kind, sympathetic, manly, womanly, personal influence —an understanding of what we might be and do.

The ordinary child upon entering school is apt to look upon his teacher as a superior being who knows all things, sees all things, and who can direct her pupils to all that is desirable; as one who abhors evil and loves the good; an embodiment of wisdom, excellence, and strength.

Happy, and thrice happy, is she who can change these fond illusions into a sincere love, a generous respect, and a confiding trust. From his first wakening intelligence the pupil has been seeing, hearing, and handling something new and interesting, has been learning of his surroundings, gaining the power to perceive, to imagine, to think, and to reason; and now in the school is he to receive a new impulse, to find his mental powers re-enforced by the inspiration of the wise teacher.

Not till he has found his hopes defeated, his confidence betrayed, and his idol broken, does he relapse into the listless, sullen creature who makes teaching a trial and life a burden.

We need better to understand the child, to put ourselves in his place. He is untruthful, but is he henceforth to be distrusted? To the young mind, I think, untruthfulness is not of necessity immoral. He, it may be, has heard of Jack the Giant-Killer and the cow that jumped over the moon, and listened to the tales of Hen

Pen, till his whole nature is aroused to the love of the marvelous and the false.

What wonderful stories has he heard and tried to rival! To what untruths has he listened and endeavored to surpass them! He has yet to learn, and nowhere better than in the school, the difference between pleasing, instructive fable and deceptive, disreputable falsehood, between poetic creation and stupid lying; to discover the sanctity of truth and the virtue of generous integrity of thought and action, to be honest, upright, wholly and always reliable.

He perhaps takes what is not his own, sees what will gratify his natural desires, and why should he withhold his hand? How is he to understand the sacredness of property, that what one has earned is his to the exclusion of all others, what many who would be regarded as philosophers do not admit. Should he be at once branded as a thief?

He is insulted by a companion, and raises his hand for a blow. Why not, when the grandest nations, under the lead of the most enlightened statesmen of the age, do the same, and when he finds his own teacher following his wrong-doings with sarcasm or suspension? Would you send him to the street to associate with swearers, plunderers, and blackguards, or try to lift him to a knowledge of honesty and a wise forbearance?

It is worthy of a serious thought, fellow-teachers—of serious thought and calm consideration—whether we shall sink or save him. That our pupils should be orderly and subordinate is essential to the well-being of the school; but that is not its highest purpose. The school is not itself an end, but the means, and the pleasing decorum of the school-room, if that be all, is hardly worth the pains. We wish the pupil himself to perceive the need

and nature of system, to acquire that power of self-control and regard for righteous law that shall become a part of his very self, a prime element of his character, to go with him from school and enter into all his life and his life's duties as a citizen.

And for some temporary inattention or slight neglect, which out of the school would hardly be a fault at all, shall he be severely censured, placed in disgrace with his mates, whose esteem he prizes, robbed of his self-respect? Shall he be turned with his face to the wall, or, perchance, thrown upon the street, still further to follow the sight of his eyes and the devices of his own untrained mind?

There is at least a suggestion in the old word "mind." "That boy must be made to mind"—not merely to obey, to submit, like the horse or the ox, but to mind, to bring his perception, his reason, his judgment into play, and thoughtfully, cheerfully bring himself into harmony with his position and surroundings. Perhaps, too, in the quiet bearing of the teacher, in her kind and firm sway, and sometimes charitable forbearance, he has read his first lesson, and seen the first example of that wise and impartial rule that should be the fashion in the home, the school, and the state.

How I have sometimes seen a troublesome pupil startled out of his waywardness into a gentler mood because the expected rebuke did not come nor the imagined blow fall! Confidence, too, begets confidence, and an apparent belief in his more wholesome desires is the best promoter of their development.

Few are the pupils who will willingly offend one for whom they are accustomed to do the little favors and acts of kindness whose thankful reception implies a conscious trust in their generous intent. Compelled obedience may do for the ox, but for the conduct of life must

be laid the deeper foundations of a thoughtful regard for the right, cemented by the habit of a calm, conscious self-control.

To the well-established, experienced incumbent of a position this order and systematic action in the school should be one of the least of the difficulties of the day. It is the temporary teacher, the substitute, who deserves our sympathy and kindly estimate of her efforts. But the regular teacher, who after months or years still finds her pupils disorderly, restless, and idle, and is compelled often to resort to the principal for aid, may well ask herself whether her powers might not better be employed in some other pursuit. She should have secured, on the part of her pupils, such a habit of orderly industry, such an appreciation of its benefits, such loyalty to herself, and such love of the right, that they would themselves frown down the lawless attempts of any new-comer. The government, the discipline of the room should have ceased to be the subject of anxious thought, and her undivided attention be given to the real work of the school, to enlivening their tasks, encouraging despondency, guiding their earnest efforts, and perhaps restraining any undue ambition. For checking any thoughtless act, a word, or even a look of surprise, should be all sufficient.

Nothing worthy the name of character, I think, has been induced till, in the chance absence of the teacher, the pupils of their own accord shall fall to their places and their allotted work at the appointed time.

The old-time topics of whispering and tardiness should give place with the experienced teacher to questions bearing more directly upon their mental growth; how to present the subjects more clearly, how to direct them to better sources of information, and how wisely sometimes to impart the needed knowledge with the best results;

to showing the bearing of their present studies upon their future well-being, and how to place herself in such relations with them that even her unconscious bearing shall be to them lessons and illustrations of uprightness ever more effective than the stated lecture or formal lesson, and without which the best of these are worse than worthless.

Closely allied with order and system, and perhaps their surest basis, is the habit of quiet, earnest industry.

The American boy—or girl, for that—who is worth the care of looking after, is active, alert, curious, and inventive, with a desire to see and do. He is eager to know somewhat of his surroundings, quick to perceive what is of interest, ever inquiring into the reasons, the causes of things and customs; and it is for the teacher to avail herself of these currents of life, and turn them into useful channels, to give these young minds problems of true interest to solve, and to put them upon the path of progress. Their energies can not and should not be repressed, but the teacher in full sympathy with their wants and needs should be able and willing so to guide their outreaching thought as to convert their active powers into abiding motives to successful work.

The activity that is not thus guided must ever prove a disturbing element, and the best and most promising pupils become the source of confusion and discouragement. They should learn that success is not of chance, that all true excellence is the result of right effort, that work well directed wins, and that industry is the only sesame to material or spiritual wealth.

No one without a purpose in life can be happy, no one without effort a success, and in the thoughtful, well-directed effort of the pupil to the attainment of some desirable result is found the truest promise of a worthy

character—a character guarded against outward assault, and strong in a well-defined purpose of future good.

Especially in its social relations does the school offer a fruitful field for the development of much that is best in character, which the wise teacher can ill afford to ignore. Indeed, only in its social relations do many of the most important questions present themselves to the teacher's attention. It is only from the associated numbers in the school-room that the subject of truth and honor comes under the teacher's notice, that integrity and uprightness can be cultivated and deeply rooted in the very nature of the pupil, that a right impulse can be given to manly courtesy, to womanly grace, and to mutual consideration and respect, the sturdier strength of the boy more truly attempered with kindness and justice, and the finer fiber of the girl unconsciously annealed to a more ductile grace and more healthful sympathies.

We often complain, and justly, of the number of pupils to a teacher, and probably with eight or ten pupils in a class a more rapid progress might be secured in the studies of the school-room; but for the growth and development of all that is valuable in character, better sixty pupils under the sympathetic sway of the capable teacher than the paltry dozen of pampered pets and petted puppets of the exclusive and high-priced private school.

Here in the full room do we find a reason for the subdued quiet and order, without which close study is impossible and hope of progress vain. Here, too, the necessity for a controlling power, a single head, some sufficient authority, not merely to restrain and quell the restless and the wayward, but to secure the earnest and studious from unintentional interruption or interference; and here, too, we learn that mutual and willing concession is the only security for the most valued rights of all. And

here the children of the rich and the poor, the foreign born and the descendants of colonial Puritan or Cavalier, meet upon a common ground, the heir to lordly wealth often surpassed in strength and keenness of intellect by the child of poverty and toil.

What basis is here found upon which to build the barriers of caste and class? What better school for the practical study of civics, for shaping the character of the child for all the duties of a worthy, intelligent citizenship, knowing his own rights and regardful of the rights of others, and wisely mindful of both?

With a due recognition of the rights of his fellows, loyal ever to well-regulated authority, with his powers developed and trained, may we not hope for our pupils a citizenship more useful to the state than was found among the stern Romans, and a better development of individual worth than Grecian philosophy ever sought or found? Have we not the elements of a public and private morality worthy of the respect and support of every lover of his kind? The formal, unmeaning, unexplained reading of a few disconnected verses of the Bible may be omitted. But are there not still the home, the church, the parent, the pastor, the Sunday-school? "Without note or comment" itself suggests to the thoughtful pupil some hidden danger, against which the teacher is an unsafe guide.

The religious household still has its morning devotions, after which one child goes to the store or the office, and another to the quiet, orderly school-room, strengthened in the one case as the other, we trust, by the morning consecration.

If we read the names of those who have gone out from our schools, we do not find them duplicated upon the registers of houses of correction and of prisons.

The Canadian shore may be fringed with those who, in their haste to be rich, have been faithless to their trusts; but these were educated in Christian, in sectarian colleges or schools where the Scriptures were read and prayers repeated.

Not yet in the busy ranks of life are there many to whom the Bible was an unread book in school.

The Bible to be useful must be read more thoughtfully, more intelligently, and not tossed aside without a word or look of gratitude. As an influence upon the school, if experience does not belie the fact, the morning song or hymn, with its sweet and tender sentiment upborne by the glad concord of happy voices, is far more effective in attuning the heart and preparing the thought for the cheerful and successful performance of daily duty than the bare and barren reading of a few detached, disconnected verses of even Holy Writ, and, I believe, lifts the soul nearer heaven.

As all roads lead to Rome, so from whatever point or on what line soever I proceed my thought always brings me at last to the teacher, on whose fitness and fidelity the efficiency of all these forces depends.

First of her qualifications is that wholesome personal influence, still unexplained by the philosopher, but read by the veriest child—that something which embraces the will of the new-comer, makes it subservient to her desire, and leads him unconsciously along the path of duty, and brings him into harmony with the conditions of the school-room. It inspires him with a self-respect and pride in his school, and encourages him to the performance of otherwise irksome tasks, instead of turning him back by a cold and formal dignity to the street or the saloon.

His passions and desires, which form, as it were, the

skirmish line to the advancing column of learning and enlightenment, instead of leading him into the swamps of depression and sloughs of vice and despondency, under her wise and firm control are to lead the way over all the dangers and difficulties of life's march to assured and well-earned victory, when the better emotions and truer sentiments may partake with real pleasure of the fruits of deserved success.

Under her guidance labor becomes a pleasure, and the irksomeness of restraint takes on the garb of joyous compliance with the wishes of a trusted guide. Harshness and severity are unknown, because unneeded; censure has changed to loved counsel; and willing, earnest effort, little by little, takes the place of forced and unfruitful toil.

The teacher alone can breathe life into the exercises of the school and make effective all these means of culture and growth. Nor can she lay off the load of responsibility. From the moment she enters the school-room—even before she enters—her influence is a power for good or evil to each and every one of the boys and girls intrusted to her care, and no moral precepts can be so efficient as her own conduct and bearing. Whether listless or alert, faithful or careless, truthful or forgetful of the right, she is still making or marring the life of them all.

The influence of a promise unperformed or an unexecuted threat no teaching can undo. A calm confidence under seeming defeat, a living hope amid all discouragements, and an unfailing charity in the face of apparent, of real guilt, should be in large store in her outfit.

Fellow-teachers, if these words of mine are of any worth, it is because they are not the product of vain imaginings, but have come from long observation and

experience. The demands made upon the teacher may be great, but the ideals upon which they are based are within easy reach. Any day of the school year a half-hour's or an hour's ride will take me into the presence of those from whom my pictures have been drawn. My ideal is a present reality, and the realization of this ideal in our own schools has but strengthened and confirmed my belief in the ever-increasing efficiency of the public school as one of the means for the training of our boys and girls in the development of worthy characters.

VIII.

THE CLASS RECITATION.

WHETHER we regard the prime purpose of the school as mental or moral instruction and discipline, the formation of character, or the manual skill that shall aid in securing a comfortable livelihood, the recitation is that about which center all the activities of school-life, giving it success or stamping it with failure.

The personal influence of the teacher is of the first importance; the power to control and direct, invaluable; the magnetism which shall inspire and incite to earnest, loving effort, a necessity to the accomplished, successful teacher; but all of these qualifications find full scope in the recitation, and, without this end, they have little cause or reason to be.

The recitation is the controlling influence, determining the length and character of the lessons, the manner of their preparation, the conduct of the pupil, his hours of study, his interest in school, and his regard for his

teacher, and gives the color, the value, to all his school-days, his waking and his sleeping hours.

It is the recitation, with its direct or indirect influences, which makes him a trusty friend or a hopeless truant, a student or a scamp, and which will guide him along the paths of honest and successful industry, or into the by-ways of indolence and worthlessness.

Here he finds the rewards of well-doing or the condemnation of his negligence; an incitement to renewed effort or an excuse for feeble exertion and lax endeavor.

In the recitation, too, the teacher gives proof of her calling or shows her unfitness for her position. In the recitation is concentrated the devotion, the thought, the life of the teacher, and the work, the purpose, the zeal, and the performance of the pupil. Here is displayed the life of the school, and here is decided whether the school shall be a means of growth and development or a source of unworthy motive, of false aims and ignoble character.

There is a common and flippant charge made against the public graded school, that the individual is neglected, that all are recklessly run through the same mill, without regard to the personal peculiarities of the pupil or to the purpose of his life; that the alert and the sluggish mind receive the same stupefying potions—that to the future senator and the incipient slugger are administered the same dull and dismal doses of dreary didactics and deadening discourses.

But the intelligent teacher soon discerns the differences of character and disposition, and distinguishes the slow and logical thinker from the ready, but unreasoning reciter; the cultured heir to wealth and winning ways from the child of sturdy toil and untrained manners; and adjusts herself and her instructions to the equally imperative, but differing needs of each.

And in the varying characters and contrasted thought of each may the other derive a knowledge of society and real life which shall fit him for the duties and responsibilities of his after-calling that no exclusive training could impart. Not because they are in the same class or grade do they receive the same impressions or benefits, or learn the same lessons of science, of truthfulness, of right. One acquires the love of learning and the principles which shall urge him onward to assured success, while the other simply tastes of the cup that shall cheer his idle hours and give him higher thoughts of humanity and life. One is awakened to the full use of his powers in the grand struggle of existence, which shall bring him a glad fruition; the other merely finds an adornment of his leisure hours, a pleasing resource from the weary demands upon his time and attention.

To the one, his study becomes an important part of his life work, while to the other, his acquisitions are but a grateful relief from perplexing and troublous cares. To one the recitation is an inspiring duty; to another, a wearisome task, or perchance, a diversion.

Notwithstanding the pleasing picture, so often drawn, of Garfield and Dr. Hopkins upon their log, it somehow happens that our pupils are not all Garfields, and it may perhaps with equal safety be admitted that we are not all Hopkinses. And, however useful a proper amount of such familiar intercourse might prove—and the relation of teacher and pupil should, I think, contain the possibility of this intimate converse—yet for the common instruction of the school, I confess, for myself, a firm and abiding faith in the power of class-teaching.

We do not all grow into the same likeness of form or feature by sitting at the same table and supplying our daily wants from the same bill of fare.

In the college and university, with more mature minds and more definite purposes of life, with habits of thought and investigation already formed, the literary or philosophic lecture or the scientific dissertation may fulfill their purpose, but in the public school, including the high-school, the skill and power of the teacher find their best expression in the well-conducted recitation.

In the right recitation should be sought, and by some means secured, the close and fixed attention of each and every pupil. To it he should come as a seeker, a discoverer of hidden treasure. Every power should be awake, the interest aroused, to get some clew to assist him in his future search, some data to verify the conclusions of his own efforts. He should be on the alert to perceive any wrong statement, to note any undue coloring, and be ready to correct the false deduction and refute the empty argument by a clear presentation of real or supposed truth. The recitation of one should be the recitation of all, and thus class instruction become truly individual instruction, with the added interest and power that can come only from contact of mind with mind.

The pupil who merely rises and repeats with close fidelity the words of the book has done nothing but exhibit an exercise of the memory, a power not to be despised, but lamented here, as so far short of the aim of the recitation. This power of memory is one of inestimable value, this power to repeat with strict accuracy the words of an author; a power fitted to hold in its fast and fond embrace the immortal words and sentences which spring only from inspired hearts and minds, and should not be wasted upon the frivolous and belittling lines so often found upon the pages of our educational

papers; too grand a power for a trifling triplet of words, or for the paltry passages of unimportant history.

The teacher greatly underrates his opportunities and mistakes his calling who simply puts forth his questions and signifies his assent or dissent to the correctness of the recital with an accompanying mark of merit or demerit.

A very ordinary text-book can do all that for the boys and girls, and much more. They are there to be taught, to be directed, to be encouraged, inspired to the prosecution of their purpose, and the dull, dead "not correct," with no indication of the nature of the error, no suggestion, falls like a blow upon the defenseless head of a young ambition that might have been guided to a worthy, useful life.

This recitation is much more than a test of the pupil's memory; he is to be taught to think, to consider the reasons for or against the statements of the book or the teacher, and clearly and thoughtfully express his views. He may be all wrong in his conclusions, and yet show a strength, a power of reasoning and statement fairly entitling him to a high rank as a student. His knowledge may be insufficient, his data incorrect, but his deductions from his premises conclusive.

The clear and correct expression of his opinions and judgments is to be encouraged as an important part of the recitation. I recollect how, in the old days—and some of the old fellows, I fear, still live—when we ventured to essay our unfledged wings in feeble flight, we were brought up standing with the supposed unanswerable remark, that "It was written by Dr. So and So, and it was hardly worth while to try to improve upon his language." And, perhaps, the eminent doctor, too, was but repeating the words of some preceding eminent dullard.

True thought is more than compiling facts, and the correct expression of that thought in well chosen words and molded phrase and sentence better than glib recital; and whether the pupil agrees with the author should cut a small figure in determining the worth of his recitation.

The worth of the recitation who shall tell? What does it show of the power of application acquired; of the careful analysis, the thoughtful investigation? Has he a firm grasp of the subject, any correct principles to aid him hereafter, any living idea that is to germinate and develop into anything of worth in forming his mind or heart?

And the mark which he shall secure, the penciled record of his worth? Oh! the blight of this marking upon all true scholarship and healthful growth! blighting alike to teacher and pupil—presenting to the pupil unworthy and dwarfing motives, and barring the teacher from his proud privilege of instructing and molding the character and life, and reducing him to the low level of the billiard-marker.

Not for a mark is the recitation held; but to give a new impulse, to point the way to more assured success. But this fixed attention, this keen thought and close reasoning, however secured and however pleasing and inspiring it may be, is work, and the stronger the magnetic force the more exhaustive the effort. Mental exertion, too, like physical, has its limits.

An hour of true recitation, discussing topics of interest, giving the arguments pro and con, enlivening the dry statement with lively illustration, should have had quite as much time for preparation. No student should come to the recitation, to the elaboration of a subject in history, literature, mathematics, or science, who has not

had the time to examine the matter thoroughly and, to his ability, exhaustively.

A limit then is set to the work of the school. I recently looked over the course of study of a large city, in which twenty-one hours of the twenty-five was prescribed as the minimum amount of time for recitation for the week.

Why do our pupils spend so many years over their arithmetics and geographies without getting into them? Isn't it a greater wonder that so many of them stay with us all these years?

My fellow-teachers, let us not willingly blind ourselves to the truth. Our pupils in the cities have too much school. From six years of age to ten, twelve, or eighteen, according to their endurance, they go to school, till they weary of the very name of school—generally by the time they reach the age of ten or twelve—and entreat their parents to let them *do* something.

Three hours a day of recitation should surely be enough for any pupil in the grammar grades—it is all the colleges demand; nor need the high-schools require more.

We stultify our pupils by asking of them more than a bright, earnest boy or girl can safely perform, and stand amazed at the result.

We absorb all the time in recitation, and devote it largely to dawdling listlessness, leaving little time for good, close, personal effort in fruitful study. Is this overdrawn?

And what of the teacher who is to secure this attention, ever alert, watchful, patient, courteous alike to pupil and parent?

Even the post of teacher in the common school, though she be of sound lungs, of digestion unimpaired, with the ruddy glow of youth still undimmed, is no sinecure.

In the early grades, before the little ones can study by themselves, save in some little diversion, some busy work with objects, the recitation is not, in any true sense, a recitation, but an exercise, which should be brief, bright, and interesting. Five or ten minutes will be enough for the little work, speedily to be repeated.

And in the higher primary grades no lessons should be assigned, I think, for home study. The confinement of the school-hours is enough, and the leisure time out of school should be employed in developing their physical nature, in becoming familiar with their surroundings, in learning something of life, of nature, and in searching out the hidden, the mysterious meaning of the thousand things around them.

In the grammar grades, too, at least one half, or in the higher classes, one third, of the school-hours should be left for study. No lessons for home study in the primary grades should be possible, and in the grammar and high school grades very little should be assigned for preparation out of school. Give the little fourth grader a book to read, if you will, a book that he can not help reading, that he will want to read aloud to his parents; but not a spelling-lesson to be learned, to be written ten times; a page of history to memorize; some puzzling problems to solve; or composition to be written by his parents or older sisters.

The lessons should, for the most part, be prepared in school. The hours, before and after school, are little enough for healthful growth, for becoming acquainted with the inner and the outer duties of home and real life, and for that knowledge above and beyond all school instruction, which every boy who is a boy must have, and for which many a girl might barter much of her acquirements in music and drawing.

The teacher who allows the pupil, after answering a question or two, to turn to some other pursuit may not be wholly wrong; she leaves some time for study, but she greatly discounts her own power and influence, and sinks herself into a very insignificant factor of the real school-life.

The pupil should have his close, strict, and accurate recitation, but should also have in school-hours the time and the opportunity for preparing himself for the proper presentation of the assigned subject for the day and the hour of recitation. There can be no true performance without due preparation.

Closely connected with this home study is associated in my mind another practice, once so common, and which can hardly be too strongly condemned. I mean the practice of keeping after school, formerly the reserve force of so many a teacher, and one of the greatest wrongs in the schools of to-day, doing more to hinder progress, to deaden interest, to dwarf ambition, and cause a distaste, a hatred of school, school duties, and school privileges, than all other influences combined.

Keeping after school fails, and must fail, to promote good conduct, to secure well-prepared lessons, to incite ambition, to awaken exertion, or encourage good attendance. The results are, in my judgment, like the early thoughts of the sons of men, evil and only evil continually.

I sometimes wish I had the gift to express, in a way to be fully understood, my utter abhorrence of this practice of keeping after school. Never have I known of a pupil renewed, reformed, reclaimed, or reconciled to his surroundings by being kept after school, by making education a punishment—that first resource of the incompetent teacher.

By some chance, or mischance, he comes in five minutes late—"Fifteen minutes after school." He stumbles in hurrying to his seat—"Remain after school." He makes a mistake in recitation—"Make it up after school." He whispers, winks with one eye—"Stay after school." He asks to leave the room—"Twenty minutes after school." He fails to respond to a querulous or sarcastic question—"I will see you after school." And if he ever succeeds in any business or calling, or has any interest or happiness in life, it will assuredly be after school, school methods, and school ma'ams have gone by.

If the room can not be controlled, why prolong the agony after teacher and pupil should have been relieved of the unwholesome air and vicious influences of weary hours and unrestrained disorder? If the lessons are unprepared, quicken the ambition and revive the spirit of improvement and useful acquisition by some curious inquiry, some ingenious device, and by prompt and pleasant dismissal, with an inspiring "good-night," but do not look for a renewed love of learning and a higher respect for authority from this ruinous resort of the incompetent, keeping after school.

To secure this close, untiring attention—the first essential of a successful recitation—there must be in the mind of the teacher a clear and well-defined conception of what is to be done, the points to be gained, and the conclusions to be reached, so that ambition may not be dulled and curiosity extinguished by misdirected effort and fruitless endeavor. The truth, as yet ungrasped, should be placed so temptingly near that indifference to its possession shall become an impossibility, and earnest exertion a delight.

We do not expect the blindfolded child to develop

useful strength or secure available wisdom by groping with outstretched hands and tripping feet among misplaced chairs and tables, however he may while away a few idle minutes for the amusement of his elusive playmates. Nor is he the wise tourist who, for the larger experience, dismisses his Alpine guides, expecting himself to find the safer paths and the wider outlooks, the better resting-places, and to gain the loftier peaks. He is likely to return, however, if he return at all, a sadder, if not a wiser man.

A thorough knowledge of the subject to be considered—much beyond the limits of the lesson—a knowledge of what will be important in the future, and what forms a mere stepping-stone to what lies farther on, its relations to other topics, will greatly aid the teacher in guiding the eager pupil to the speediest and best results; will save from many a fruitless digression, wearisome repetition, and empty recital. For the older, as well as the younger pupils, the proper method of approaching a subject, the logic of the exercise, is often quite as important as the facts to be learned. In many cases the recitation may well be little more than a reading of the unstudied lesson, with a running commentary of the teacher, briefly showing the bearing of this or that fact, the reason of one statement and the meaning of another, suggesting certain lines of thought and ready references for their better comprehension. Here and there a question may be started, perhaps some incident related, to quicken and arouse the interest and thought. For this work, the teacher needs, like the commander of an army, to have her well-trained powers and her mental resources well in hand, with perhaps a skirmish line of fine instincts and keen perceptions, protected on either wing by a well-assured confidence and a wise discretion; secured against

unforeseen emergencies by a large reserve force of general information, ready wit, and close logic.

Of quite as much importance, too, she should have learned or discerned the character of those with whom she has to do—their mental powers, their dispositions, their habits and modes of thought, their likes and dislikes. A knowledge of their associates, their employment out of school, their home-life—all this should be as open and plain to her as the book from which she prepared for her work. She must adapt herself to the bright, easy learner and the duller, but it may be, the deeper student; to the flippant reciter and the slower stammerer; to the pliant fawner and the sturdy independent; and devise means to encourage, chasten, and direct, with an ever-hopeful trust and kindly charity; an unsuspecting watchfulness and an unfailing personal interest.

Sometimes, too, the firm authority and timely severity find their true place.

The mere hearing of lessons, the asking of questions, however scholarly, and couched in choicest language, with no apparent personal interest in the success, the individual welfare of the pupil, will not win in this mental conflict.

How many a young, earnest heart has lost its fond ardor, wearied of its high, honest purpose, and fallen back into the ranks of the careless and undeserving, from the real, or supposed, lack of the teacher's interest in his progress. The sharp censure, so that it come from the indignant heart of a friend at some delinquency, will awaken and expand the young spirit, and fill it with stronger purposes and better hopes than the cold indifference of the calm, uncaring critic.

A great barrier to success, too, cutting her off from

any sympathetic relations with her class, does she raise, who calls upon her pupils by the card, one of those self-imposed restraints that hold the hands, the hearts, the thoughts of the teacher, depriving her of much of her power for good.

No teacher, I think, can well command the attention of her class who is shut in to this practice ; and no pupil, unless urged on by some superhuman impulse, can fix his thought upon the recitation whose fate is fixed by the run of a handful of cards.

To be interested he must feel responsible for every topic presented, for every question asked. But when his name has once been drawn, what further personal interest can he have ? And if, by some chance—as I have sometimes seen—he is called upon a second time, he has a ready and safe refuge in the reply, "I have recited once." And why may he not be questioned a second, a third time, or any number of times, when needful ?

Two or three years since, after I had discouraged this use of the cards, one of our active, working teachers came to me with the inquiry, what she should do with them ? I told her that the best use of them that occurred to me was, to open the drawer of her desk, quietly drop them in, and close the desk. A few weeks later she told me that she had adopted my plan, and for the first time felt herself free to conduct a recitation.

If the pupil's attention is to be held, he must feel that he is at any time to be called upon for an explanation, a correction, an illustration ; and every day, as a rule, should he have the opportunity to recite. Sitting silent and unnoticed day after day, he soon loses all interest, becomes listless, or restless, and ere long ceases to prepare the lesson for which he has no use.

Though it be nothing more than a simple yes or no,

he has had his say, has shown himself a living entity, and goes home at night with a higher satisfaction with himself and the school for just that one small word.

What an opportunity, too, does the recitation furnish for imparting information, for giving the pupil an insight into the rich fields of literature, science, history, and real life.

The recitation, as we have said, is more than a rehearsal of memorized pages; it is a discussion of subjects that have been already carefully studied. It may be that very little attention need be given to the reading of the text, which will be already clearly understood, but may suggest relations and conditions well worthy the consideration of teacher and pupil.

The mere fact may be nothing to the student, but indirectly bring about results of surpassing interest. An exercise in reading may suggest subjects in history, in biography, in botany, and astronomy. As an extreme example, take Macaulay's essay on "Warren Hastings," found in so many of our readers:

"The place was worthy of such a trial. It was the great hall of William Rufus—the hall which had witnessed the just sentence of Bacon and the just absolution of Somers; the hall where the eloquence of Strafford had for a moment awed and melted a victorious party, inflamed with just resentment; the hall where Charles had confronted the high court of justice with the placid courage which has half redeemed his fame. There were seated the fair-haired daughters of the house of Brunswick. There the historian of the Roman Empire thought of the days when Cicero pleaded the cause of Sicily against Verres, and where, before a senate that still preserved some show of freedom, Tacitus thundered against the oppressors of Africa."

As mere words, one might as well recite the alphabet or the multiplication table.

Who and what were Macaulay, Hastings, William Rufus, Bacon, Strafford, the historian of the Roman Empire, Brunswick, Cicero, Verres, and Tacitus? What did they do, and why are their names introduced here? What has Cicero or William Rufus to do with Hastings's doings with the Begum?

All this is beyond the grammar grades, and yet, without some definite knowledge, some fair idea of these characters, wherein is it more valuable reading than the prognostics of last year's almanac? The recitation is a reading-lesson in which the pupils should give expression to intelligent thought and true sentiment. But the investigation of all this history and biography is beyond them. The teacher must intervene, and, by a few graphic touches, place before them these pictures so vividly that they shall remain as a part of their mental constitution. Nor is it so difficult a task for him who is fitted for his place.

With an almost inappreciable inroad upon the reading exercise, these illustrations can be placed within the pupil's grasp as no stolid study of cyclopædia can do, and enliven the work with an interest which no professional technics can impart.

In the reading of a class are the possibilities of a liberal education, of an art and a culture beyond what the graduates of high-school and college so carefully infold in their diplomas. If we but knew our opportunities, the professor of elocution and the countless exemplars of what Delsarte never dreamed of would soon find their occupation gone, and our boys and girls, instead of thoughtless mouthers, would sometimes become intelligent learners and thinkers.

The reading-lesson is not to be turned into a study of biography or history, nor are all these allusions to be learned at once. Enough can be done to give the character of the essay and inspire the class with the spirit of the matchless essayist—one suggestion here, and another there, without serious hindrance or interruption. Some of the characters can be more fully studied at home or in the school library, not indeed in any exhaustive way, but surely enough for an intelligent reading, enough to awaken the desire to delve deeper into the exhaustless mines of literature and to enlarge the pupil's mental horizon and prepare him for the more thorough work of his school-life and furnish some food for thought during the leisure hours of an active or laborious life.

One of the most accurate and scholarly of my college friends told me that he never sought thoroughly to prepare the whole of a lesson, in Latin, for instance, but having done enough for the purpose of a fair recitation, he then studied one or two lines exhaustively. This habit, long before his college course was completed, had made him a model for nice, discriminating scholarship.

It is not often in lumps, in masses, that wisdom or learning is to be acquired. The nuggets of knowledge in the school-room are as rare as those of gold in the hearts of the hills.

The love of learning, of knowing, fortunately, is a common inheritance from which few are shut out. To keep alive this love—to turn this curious, inquiring nature into the right paths, where the search shall be more sure of the reward in the speedy gratification of desire and show something of the relative worth of the different objects of desire and how to distinguish these, are the teacher's work; and to lead the pupil to see that small, but continuous accretions, from worthy effort, hour by

hour and day by day, make up the sum total of our work.

And before those little limbs are strong to mount the rugged roads, or those laughing eyes have sadly learned to discern the miry ways, shall we never reach out a friendly hand, or sometimes even lift them us the steep, lest they dash their feet against the stones?

But are not the lessons assigned to be learned? and how can it be known that they are learned unless they are recited? If we only could know that they are learned after the recitation! The subject is indeed to be understood, comprehended, made a part of the pupil's self—to be converted into something that shall avail him in his future work. But whether it is to be learned in the style of this, or that author is of little importance. Our school histories and geographies are generally but enumerations of a few bare facts, some important events, but even in these rarely show, by the relations of facts and events, why those mentioned are of more importance than a thousand others of which no mention is made. Other authors have expressed their views in different verbal signs; and the pupil, if indeed a student, should give his views in a still different form of words more consonant with his own mental condition and delicate shading of thoughts, opinions, and judgments.

A lesson is learned when the student has a clear, well-founded opinion of the subject matter, but not necessarily when the page can be declaimed.

The restriction of the pupil to a single book after he is old and strong enough to think, to study, is a misfortune if the teacher is equal to the place. From the reading of one text-book the pupil is liable to receive a very limited, a narrow idea of the subject; and when, after school-days are over, he falls upon a different ver-

sion of some event he begins to doubt of the wisdom of the schools, and of authors, and, perchance, to question whether there be any truth in the world.

He should be taught in school, in the recitation, to compare different authorities, different mathematical definitions, to weigh carefully the evidences, and to form his own judgments as to their worth and correctness.

But can he, will he do this, with the cold, unimpassioned teacher before him at the desk, with well-pointed pencil in hand, to enact the part of the recording angel upon his effort, with never a sympathetic tear to blot the unhappy entry.

The arithmetic lays down certain principles, with examples enough for the pupil to ascertain whether he comprehends them. It is for the teacher to see, by the use of the same examples, or by others involving the same principles, if he truly understands them aright. We adopt the topical method, and place upon the blackboard a column of a dozen or fifteen topics for each State or country — a very paltry and belittling device, as it seems to me, if carried too far. The pupil should learn, should have a method, it is true, but let him determine what are the important points to be presented.

These points do not always come up before the mind in the same order, or in the same numbers. Sometimes the water-ways, sometimes the railroads, now the productions, and again the scenery, stand out in distinctness, and should enlist the interest and control the thought of the pupil. To one the civil development of the people, to another the social, presents itself; while again the industrial, the commercial, the artistic development claims attention.

The dictionary, the cyclopædia, the map, all find a useful place, and even the novel, the romance, present

valued pictures of life and manners, and sometimes aid in the solution of social and political problems beyond the scope, the possibility of the text-book.

The lesson, as I have indicated, is not something to be merely recited, but a subject, or subjects, to be studied and investigated to which the pupil is to give his best thought and best powers, that when the hour of recitation comes he may be prepared to take an intelligent part in the discussion.

First of all, he must learn to think, and to express himself in a clear, systematic, and logical way; to adduce facts to sustain his opinions; to be ready with crayon, metaphor, or incident to illustrate his argument. His mental powers must be aroused, quickened, disciplined, and strengthened for future use, and for those ends the oral recitation presents the best, if not the only, efficient means.

The written recitation, in such favor with many teachers, is in no true sense a recitation. It is simply an examination, useful, nay, in a limited way, indispensable, but not a recitation. The real uses of a recitation have no play in the written exercise.

The power, the personal magnetism of the teacher, and the fruitful suggestion find no place here. She sits idle and useless. The pupil might familiarize himself with the mechanical parts of a written performance, might improve his penmanship, his spelling and accuracy of expression, but these are the very points that the written exercise commonly ignores. Shall a pupil in geography receive a deduction from his credits merely because his spelling is abominable? Spelling is not geography. Because he can not paragraph correctly, is his knowledge of history diminished? His punctuation and his capitals are problematical, but what has

that to do with his knowledge of numbers, of personal character, of climate and productions?

The recitation should be oral, instinct with life, and full of interest, with an occasional examination, written briefly, carefully, and correctly, with all the elements of a written exercise carefully noted and corrected.

So important a part does the recitation, under the skillful teacher, play in the school economy, that in comparison, as it seems to me, the written examination is nowhere; and I am coming more and more to the opinion that a pupil who has acquitted himself with credit in the daily recitations should pass on to the next grade unquestioned, despite any failure in the stated written examination of his class; that a class which has shown itself qualified for the work of the grade should on its completion be passed to the next grade without the test examination.

The written examination, without any intent or fault of the examiner, may be, and often is, outside the qualifications of the pupil. The teacher may have erred in her instructions, but should the pupils suffer? The principal should be so well acquainted with the quality of the instruction and the application of the class that it should not be possible for it to come to the end of its grade work without some fitness for advancement.

Rarely, I think, should the pupil be put down or kept back by a formal examination when the daily recitations have been satisfactory.

The examination is valuable chiefly in relieving the teacher from the charge of partiality or prejudice. I have often wished that pupils, that classes, might be promoted, not on the results of any formal examination, but on the promise of their daily work for future success.

No one, in preparing a set of questions, can say much of their worth in determining the scholarship, the power of the pupil. He may strike points, important, indeed, but which had been partially neglected by the teacher in her zeal in other directions, and the pupils will fail, while exhibiting a power of thought, a skill in analysis of character, a discrimination and judgment of more worth than an accurate statement of the facts involved.

I recall an instance in which the pupil showed an utter ignorance of the subject required, but at the same time, in admitting the disqualification, gave such an evidence of elegant diction, of clear, distinct thought, so much originality, that my better judgment would not permit me to pass any other than a meritorious judgment upon her ability.

I have not dwelt much upon the methods, the details of the recitation; these must depend largely upon the individual teacher and the subject. There is, I think, no best method for all teachers in presenting any subject. There are certain underlying principles that should always direct and control, certain things to be forever avoided.

Nor should the same method be followed at all times. Now should come the topical recitation, in which the pupil can present his views in some fullness and elegance of language; now the quick, short question and answer; the pupil now feeling his way along thoughtfully and carefully, and now prompt with the ready rejoinder; now with the crayon in hand illustrating his descriptions, and again essaying the abstract argument in concise, discriminating terms; at one time promptly and accurately performing a prepared example, and again applying the principles to a problem with different, but similar conditions; taking our pupils out of the ruts of routine, and

leading them into the ways of thought and intelligence—not machines, but coming men and women.

But there should always be in all these exercises a tendency, a nearer approach to a distinct enunciation, correct language, pleasing tones, and plain reason.

Nor is ease and grace of manner to be forgotten, as shown in rising and sitting, in walking across the room, in standing, holding the book, and handling the pointer. Little things all, and not to be made a means of annoying the pupil, but to be encouraged, cultivated, cherished; not to be brought into too great prominence, or regarded as the absolute need of the statesman or the successful workman, but as attractive in the school as in the home, and having a larger influence upon the conduct, the character, than is often imagined, and almost inseparable from those kindly relations between teacher and pupil, without which no school can attain to its true position as an educating, civilizing institution.

When our tables of statistics show us 28,000 in the first grade, 16,000 in the second, 9,000 in the fourth, it would seem that we can hardly begin the good work too soon or too lovingly.

Entering the lowest room, while in those sweet childish tones come up the simple words, "Where do all the babies go?" I often find myself involuntarily coupling with it the daisy line, "Largely underneath the snow." Where are the remainder of the 28,000 who came to us last September.

If our pupils could be, from six to fourteen years of age, under the kindly care, and have their recitations under the wise guidance and inspiring breath of earnest, sympathetic teachers, such as may be found in our own schools, whose names answer promptly to my thought, some whose faces have long been familiar in our schools,

and some who can count their length of service only in months, this love of knowing, of learning would, it seems to me, be kept alive; the eye would kindle at the thought of school and teacher; the hand, the heart, the mind and soul, would all grow quicker, stronger, tenderer; more sensitive to good influences and suggestions, more skillful to do, more hopeful to dare, and stronger to resist evil, truer to the right

And where, with her sixty pupils, restless with young life, glowing with childish ardor to do, to try, to know—coming from homes of penury or of plenty, but all alike hungering for that which shall respond to their wants—where can there be a field of more absorbing interest, of brighter promise, and, to the truly chosen, of richer reward? and where should there be awakened a deeper sense of duty and responsibility, brightened by a tinge of higher hope and fonder expectation, than in the recitation room of the public graded school?

IX.

THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL.

In my efforts once and again to emphasize the personal influence of the class teacher in quickening the intellect and developing the character of the pupil, I have neither lost sight of nor underrated the importance and value of that teacher of teachers, the school principal.

For, whatever the character or qualifications of the assistants, whether versed in the details of the schoolroom, or but just essaying her untried powers; whether running her little round of familiar and unquestioned

school duties, or ever thoughtfully seeking for new and more fruitful methods, still with the principal will rest the whole tone and spirit of the school; and its influence in enlisting and uplifting the thought of parents and people, or letting it sink to a low level of negligence and thoughtlessness, will largely depend upon the wisdom, the enterprise, the intelligence, the true manhood, or womanhood of the principal.

Many a teacher, I fancy, wearied, worried, and worn with the ever pressing and perplexing cares of the school-room, with its inexorable demands upon her vitality and patience, often, in thought, turns her longing looks to the prize of a principalship, as a quiet refuge from care, from infinite detail, from troublous boys and annoying girls, from wearisome hours of examination papers and dull compositions.

Such do sometimes pass the examinations and become principals, and their influence is soon seen in the dull, routine school, in the easily satisfied teacher, the *memoriter* recitation, the unthinking, careless pupil, the lounging, slouching, gum-chewing boy or girl, who had better never have seen the inside of a school-room. The teacher who tires of her work, sees nothing but evil in the hearts and minds of the boys and girls, praying for the calm haven of rest in the quiet office, with its revolving-chair and comfortable lounge, may, perchance, obtain a principal's certificate, but is not wanted at the head of one of our public schools.

The *teacher*, even when upborn by a deep love and a fond hope for her pupils, will often find the hours wearying and wearing; the vigilance of the *principal* must be ceaseless and untiring. The teacher, with her little ones ever under her eye, with ready discernment soon learns of their childish ways, their natures, and their tendencies,

and how to check their wayward fancies and thoughtless errors, and direct them into the right paths; with those of *maturer* years and more fixed habits of thought and action, the principal has to do, and become equally familiar with their characters and dispositions—a task requiring a deeper study and a more profound philosophy to perceive the real causes of their success or failure in teaching and discipline, and guide the wanderers, often unconsciously, into better ways and to more assured success, and these, too, seen only at intervals, and for brief periods.

Instead of a single grade of work, he must be alike acquainted with the entire course of study, in its general outline and in its smaller details, as ready to suggest a device for the toddling of six, as for the studious and thoughtful youth of fourteen, or even the tried and sometimes trying teacher of untold years.

His is the life, the impulse of the school, its controlling and directing power, its inspiration and its hope; adjusting and harmonizing its various parts, encouraging here and checking there, making his presence felt for good by teacher and pupil at once, omnipresent in his influence, never obtrusive, but alive to the working of all the mental and material machinery intrusted to his care.

Nowhere but in the school-room, seeing and hearing, with keen observation and nice discernment, can this knowledge, this power and influence be acquired.

Meditations in the office and theories worked out at the desk furnish little material to nourish the minds and souls of teachers or pupils. There are few things more useless for the furnishing of a school than the office principal.

The organization of the school, the distribution of the pupils to their several rooms under the appointed teachers,

hardly need be mentioned as the first business of the principal; and yet the manner of its doing strikes the key-note, as it were, of the year, indicating to the observant eye of teacher and pupil the character of the year's work—whether it is to be prompt, firm, and harmonious in its action, or weak, dawdling, and discordant.

In truth, the whole scheme of organization should be clearly and definitely wrought out in the mind of the principal before the opening morning, as far as the conditions can be known, with alternatives ready at his command for possible contingencies.

The plan of the school should be as clearly defined in his thought as that of a coming battle in the mind of the commander; prepared, however, for this or that movement, should the necessity occur, but ready with well-digested devices and ample forces in case of any unforeseen exigencies. With wise and calm decision and prompt action should he put his plans into operation, unruffled by the countless questions and suggestions of pupils and parents; every teacher in her place, every pupil promptly to his seat, ready for the work, so that almost with the morning bell the whole school may start off, like the machinery of a vast factory at the touch of the lever that puts it all in motion, with no jarring, no friction, no undue tension, but quietly, smoothly, strongly, all in perfect accord for the working out of earnest, industrious, well-informed, self-controlled, intelligent, and worthy characters.

Little adjustments may afterward be made from day to day, as characters and attainments may suggest, but by Tuesday morning, at the furthest, the school should be in good working order, with carefully prepared programmes on the blackboard, with teachers ready for their

assigned work, and pupils knowing their allotted parts, and eager to engage in them.

With scarce forty weeks in the year, we can not afford to spend all, or most of the first week in getting ready; and to whom shall we look for the realization of this possible ideal but to the well-equipped, the wisely experienced, the alert, vigilant, calm, high-minded principal?

If it were true that "we learn to do by doing," which it is not, save in a very narrow and limited sense, the principal's work would now be well-nigh complete, and he might sit back in calm composure to observe with silent satisfaction the growing prosperity of his school.

"We learn to do by doing" is one of those aphoristic half-truths well suited to catch the ear and delude the mind of the unthinking. We may acquire a mechanical facility by repeated doings of what we already know how to do, but we learn to do by learning how other people do, and by the aid of this knowledge striving to do something better. The mere continuous doing of what we can do dulls the intellect, deadens the inventive powers, and stifles progress. If it were true, there were no need of principal or normal school or any school. Froebel and Pestalozzi, Mann and Hopkins might be put aside, and our children be left to learn to do by doing, not by instruction; by skillful training, not by study and reading the wisdom and historic records of the past. No, my friends, by the mere doing the generations of men would not attain to the school crayon or the ham sandwich in a thousand years.

The whole past of our race, with its trials and its failures, its sufferings and successes, is ours, and are we to put aside all the teachings of the writhing centuries, and learn to do by doing over again what the ages have con-

demned and strive to reach by our unaided efforts what the poorest laborer has as his own ?

Some years since, to a suggestion of mine with regard to teaching geography, the teacher replied: "I have taught this subject in this way for fourteen years, and I think I know."

She had learned to do by doing, and was just fourteen years behind the times. But she still had sense ; she does not teach in just that way to-day.

Not very much does the best and the brightest of us learn but what we learn from those who have gone before us. The one thing that has placed us in the forefront of our race is, that when we have learned one thing we have made it the stepping-stone to something better, ever toiling onward and upward to the ultimate good of humanity, ever sought and never reached.

With the organization of the school the work of the principal has but just begun. Here is the starting-point from which he is to advance to acknowledged success or fall back into the ranks of the called, but not chosen.

Yes, my fellow-teachers, though yours is the work, as has been my continual theme, and stronger and stronger my belief, as the years go by, the principal is the school ; the school is what he makes it. The organization, the plan of the work is his, and his the spirit that shall animate, the methods that shall execute, and the character that shall control.

But what is the power of one over a thousand ? What can the principal do for the individual pupils ? And yet just here, I feel, is the field of his usefulness ; not in direct, personal influence, but largely through his teachers must he be made known to them ; and yet to no pupil, boy or girl, should his entrance into the school-room be an unimportant event.

To the pupils are his best efforts pledged, but by his teachers must his purposes be performed. With his assistants, by his wise conduct, his earnest purpose, his faithful discharge of duty, by his appreciation of excellence and worthy endeavor, his recognition of merit, and kindly charity toward unintentional error, he must be in full and hearty accord. His censures should be without bitterness or humiliation, his suggestions timely and sympathetic, his personal interest undisguised. The strong, successful teacher deserves his approval, and the young and inexperienced his encouragement and advice. His personal sympathy in troubles, his aid in difficulties, and his tender guidance out of the meshes of mistaken efforts will not return to him void of kind respect and unfailing loyalty.

And I have sometimes expressed the thought which has wrought itself into my belief that the principal who can not by his discretion, his nice discernment, his thorough devotion to his school and its duties, his interest in the success of pupil and teacher, win the approval and thorough respect of his teachers during the year, or at the most the second year, is sadly lacking in some element of a successful principal.

They may doubt the wisdom of some of his measures, but only to put forth the stronger efforts to conquer success; he may meet with unmerited censure, only to unite them the more firmly in his defense. And he who can not command this concurrence of good will and unquestioning support of the better part of his teachers will find his wisest art of little avail.

With the consciousness that the principal is with her in her efforts, feeble though they be, there can be no foundation, no suggestion, for the charge sometimes made, that the teacher has no resource, no redress. She should

feel that he is at hand, and but too willing to render any aid, ever ready with his counsel and full support to sustain her, or rather to enable her to sustain herself.

Not for every little difficulty and annoyance should she fall back upon his authority with paltry complaints and petty questionings, thus stepping down from her true position, forfeiting the confidence of her pupils and soon losing her own self-respect. Few things will sooner deprive a teacher of her power for usefulness before her class than this habit of sending pupils to the office for correction. In truth her highest usefulness is already gone before the frequency has yet become a habit.

Quietly, calmly, and firmly, with faith in herself and in young humanity, unruffled by seeming failure and obvious reverses, hoping still, must she persevere, trustful where trust is found—kindly interest winning respectful love, and mutual regard finding expression in willing obedience, sympathetic effort, and unfailing gratitude.

Never in haste or in anger should a pupil be referred to the office, and, save in the rarest of cases, not till the principal has been seen by the teacher and fully informed of the nature of the fault or failure. Often this conference itself will render it unnecessary to send the pupil at all.

But when the need shall come, as sometimes come it will, the worthy teacher should find ready to her support the full authority of the principal, the board of education, and the entire moral force of the community. With each and every day should the principal be so well acquainted with the character of the teacher's work and her manner of discipline and instruction that no serious difficulty could come upon him by surprise or find him unprepared for the crisis.

What greater folly than for a teacher, in a moment of irritation or weak despair, induced by late hours, a hasty breakfast, or jangling nerves, or, it may be, by the weariness of too severe study, to send an offending pupil to the office! The principal is probably away hearing a recitation or visiting a room. The offender meets in the hall four or five companions on the same errand, all ready for a united raid upon the teacher's character, her weakness of temper and control, and listening with admiring glee to the recital of his shrewd devices and their success in making the teacher mad.

And when by and by they subside into quiet at the principal's approaching footfall, what can he do? "Well, John, what do you want?" "The teacher sent me!" "What for?" "I don't know!" "What have you been doing?" "Nothing!" "Did she send any word?" "No, she just got mad. I didn't do nothing!" The principal throws away a little good but inappropriate advice upon him and sends him back to his room to repeat his deviltries. And she goes to bed in tears that the principal does not support her.

No redress for the teacher! The considerate, fairly intelligent teacher can always rest in the assurance that there is no public or private interest to which the entire people will always give such full and hearty support as to any reasonable measures for adding to the efficiency and success and the good name of the public school, in which are centered their highest hopes and deepest affections.

Now and then is found an unreasonable parent, it is true, but his unreasonableness is not lessened by an unreasoning teacher.

My experience teaches me that there is no more fruitful source of the irritation and unreasoning complaint of

parents than the frequent notes of teachers to them, that "the child whispers"; "your son looks round, he laughs"; "John makes a noise with his feet, Charles whistles"; "was tardy twice last week"; "I caught Mary to-day writing notes"; "I wish to have you call and see me to-morrow"; "your son can not return to school again unless you come with him"; "I told Fannie to stay after school and write her spelling ten times, and she went away"; "Harry pulled a girl's hair, and I wish you to punish him—severely"; "Willie asked to go out, and I found he had been playing marbles."

How exasperating, how destructive to the order and scholarship of the school any one of these may seem to the sensitive, earnest teacher! What sleepless nights and sorrowing days are hers! Oh, that she could teach these young and erring natures to see as she sees! And yet, to the laboring, loving, doting father and mother, proud of the bright spirits and active minds of their children, how paltry, how frivolous, how petty it all seems!

Their children are good children, playful, as they should be; they mean nothing bad; they wish them to do well, and they think they do. "The school-ma'am is a crank—that's what's the matter; and the principal isn't much better or he would put a stop to all this nonsense."

Fortunately, no one can send a pupil from school for misconduct, for tardiness, or on an errand but the principal; and I have a growing belief that no note, no letter should be sent to a parent which has not been *submitted*, at least, to the principal; that no parent come to the school in matters of misconduct without first of all meeting the principal. If he deems it desirable to call in the teacher, well and good, but the interview should be with the principal.

Most of the parents of our pupils are workers, and

the need of calling at the school means a half-day's pay. Almost all of these troubles should never go to the parent; he can do little or nothing. The teacher must guide the childish heart into prompt, orderly, obedient, and industrious ways, and she is poorly provided for her work who has often to call upon either parent or principal for the thousand little things which stand in the way of the erring incompetent's success.

The co-operation of the parent is indeed desirable, and no worthy effort should be omitted to secure it, but it can never be obtained by the repeated letter and the frequent complaint. These too often result in irritation and the unguarded remark in the presence of the child which sadly detracts from the teacher's authority, and is the fruitful source of much of the discontent and disorder of the school-room. The truly incorrigible are usually from families in which an appeal to the parent had better have been omitted.

And when one or two conferences prove unproductive of good the principal had better fall back upon his own resources, nor further disturb the parental mind.

With the perfect teacher, who understands the thought of the child, there are, in my judgment, no incorrigibles of sound mind; with the average teacher there will be here and there one; with the poor teacher, the good pupil is the exception, and for the most part is goody-goody and dull.

The bright boy, or girl, of ten or fourteen years, who is to make his way in this world, is full of strong, but untrained activities, which unless grasped and guided by the sympathetic teacher will lead to infinite trouble in the school-room and in the home. From the homes of the rich, from the homes of the poor, they come to us, and the wise teacher must, at the fitting moment, seize

upon these vital forces and kindly turn them into the channels of truth and duty.

No sham, no cant, can impose upon the American youth; straight, honest, honorable conduct alone can prevail. The youth has his rights as well as the man of mature years, and he understands fair treatment and kindly interest. And with no corporal punishment in our schools, shall we ask a *parent* to *beat* his child?

Shall we thus admit our own incompetence, and request the parent to supply our deficiencies? Too often the *severity* of the parent is the thing to be deplored, and the kind consideration of the teacher the one element of humanity that can arrest and save the young heart from destruction.

But the true work of the principal is yet to begin. The teachers and their pupils are in their rooms; the morning song is song, and the hum of busy life is heard. And no more trying time for the young teacher can be imagined. Sixty young minds and hearts to be interested and secured; sixty active bodies, fresh from the home, or the street, to be brought into harmonious action, calmed, quieted, and controlled. And where shall she begin? Much of this first day's work must be helped out by the principal in seeing that this temporary initial work is systematic and pleasing.

The older teachers need little aid; they start off without a jar, free from friction or idleness. With the closing bell they have their classes well in hand, their work wisely laid out, and lessons assigned, and with a few friendly words of wise counsel, their classes with high purpose, confidence aroused, and quiet demeanor bid a cheerful good-night and depart.

But with the inexperienced, who shall depict the slowly passing hours? With no definite aim, ignorant

even of her pupils' names, with no assigned exercises, and with longing thoughts of the high-school from which she has just come, and no developed interest in the little, loving, helpless, dependent beings hanging upon her every word, to which she fears to give utterance—here is a field for the principal, if wise, to do his best work, and lay the foundation for the success of his school, and for the most trustful reliance, and the surest support of his teachers. Happy the principal who knows his opportunities!

The first temporary programme should early receive his careful attention. No unimportant item is this programme of work, and should not be left to the haphazard guess of a young girl who can not as yet have given any special thought to the machinery of the school or to the development of the mind and character of the child.

The different subjects should follow each other so that each may be a change, a relief from the preceding; some should command the freshest, the brightest thought of the pupil, while others may require less mental effort, and yet serve as an incitement, an inspiration to better work. No principal zealous of the highest success can neglect the programme of exercises for the several rooms of his school. Upon their prompt preparation and wise arrangement depends very largely the success of the school and his fitness for his position as a school principal.

The weary assistant teacher will be pleased to observe that I make no weak apologies for the shortcomings of the principal.

He has accepted his position for the performance of certain and several uncertain duties, and is to be held to a strict account for the proper performance of such duties.

Now, apart from his manifold duties of receiving and classifying pupils, must he see that the daily programme is faithfully carried out, that the teachers have gained a hold upon their children and aroused them to the real purpose of the school, and are directing their thought and action into the ways of growth and progress.

There are certain methods in numbers, in language, which they should follow, certain clearly defined ways in geography, in history, which every teacher should know and accept, and the principal in these early days should by kindly counsel and timely suggestion see that the approved methods and systems are observed, not disdaining now and then to take a class himself. Unfortunate, indeed, the school which has reached a point beyond which is no improvement.

The excellencies of every teacher and her deficiencies should be well understood by him, and with a hearty commendation of the good and a ready discerning of the better elements of the less successful and the fitting suggestion to remedy the defects, should the principal be ever alert, ever courteous, and always reliable.

To one the word of encouragement is needed to strengthen her weak spirit, to another must he suggest some method or device to enliven her work, and yet again endeavor to impart the true ideal of education and its purpose to one who knows and thinks of school only as the avenue to a regular salary; guiding and directing all, yet leaving always freedom enough for the teacher to test her own strength and ingenuity.

In a recent teachers' examination, in answer to a question as to the advantages of having a pupil complete the grade under a single teacher, I was not a little surprised at the almost uniform statement, in effect, that when a class is promoted to a new teacher much time is

lost in a complete and thorough review of the previous work to ascertain what the class knows.

It is a fact well recognized by every principal of a dozen years' experience that no class in primary, grammar, or high school ever passes to a higher grade more than partially prepared for the work, in the opinion of the receiving teacher. This can be safely assumed with no loss of time in extensive reviews to learn it.

Not a day, not an hour, should be thus employed. The class has been promoted by the principal upon what he deems a sufficient test, and it does seem a pretty severe reflection upon his judgment and discrimination for his assistant to institute a lengthened investigation into the fitness of the pupils for their work. The principal should make it sure that the new class enters at once upon the new work.

Lookout Mountain would never have been climbed if, after the first successful assault, the surviving officers had gone back to see how far they had got. It was the impulse of that success that carried the brave boys up and over, with little for the officers to do but try to keep up with them.

And so should the teacher receiving a new class avail herself of that advance of the pupils to go onward and surmount the difficulties before them! What, though some expressions other than her own are used? some definitions given in a different form from hers? These can be easily righted, if need be, as the weeks go by, without disconcerting and discouraging these young, ambitious souls by sharp criticism of their carelessness and negligence, or even their previous instruction. She may profitably recall that at the next remove her own forms of expression and statement are likely to undergo the same ordeal from her superior teacher.

By the very act of promotion the principal has decided that the class has satisfactorily completed the earlier grade, and should allow no fancied insufficiency to stand in the way of an immediate, unconditional advance upon the new subject; and no teacher should for an instant stop to question the qualifications of the class. Every new topic involves more or less of the preceding, and any real defects can readily be remedied with no discouraging halt or demoralizing withdrawal. Little interest do the hopeful boys and girls find in beating over the old straw, and gleaning in already shaven fields; the progressive, loving teacher rather should, Boaz-like, take them to her heart and share with them the fullness of the early harvest.

Perhaps there is nothing in which the guidance of the principal can be more fruitful of good results than in the arrangement and adjustment of the different parts of his school, that all by a united, harmonious effort may move on with a single purpose to a common end and within the allotted time.

Here and there, it is true, an exceptional student may advance with quicker step and longer stride, or, perchance, fall behind the movement of the class; but in our schools the average pupil should compass the grade within the year, and move on promptly and successfully to the next; and the graduation of a class at an average age of more than fourteen or fifteen might well be a subject of investigation by the board.

A pupil who has been two years in a grade should be peremptorily advanced without a question and any member of the eighth grade sixteen years of age passed to the high-school unexamined, that they may have the trial, at least, of a new teacher.

Not till the end of the forty weeks should the princi-

pal wait to find that the class is not prepared to pass grade. The work of the year should be divided, in his thought, at least, into that of months or weeks, as at the races, I notice, they time them at the quarter and the half, as well as at the end.

The teacher may easily be too thorough, too attentive to minute details and nice distinctions, unsuited to the present powers of the pupil, but which with the nicer discrimination of a higher culture, will prove but as a pastime for his thoughtful hours. One of a wider reading and a more extended view of the worth of a liberal education may delight to lead the pupils aside into the pleasant fields of learning and amuse them with the curiosities of literature, science, or philosophy. And there are those who become so attached to the little ones committed to their care, that they fain would hold them a little longer and finish the beautiful work which no one else, they fancy, can do so well.

But it surely is a mistaken affection that holds back the pupil from the speedy accomplishment of his task; a false enthusiasm that would luxuriate among the beauties of a culture which can be truly discerned only by the mature and finely trained mind; a foolish pride or ambition that seeks or expects to know or teach all of everything or anything. With no uncertain or flagging step should the classes, as the months and years go on, pass from topic to topic and from grade to grade, promptly and surely according to the outlined course, with full ranks and ever growing powers and developed characters, under the watchful, wise direction of the competent principal.

The examinations, too, should be within his knowledge and control. I have sometimes heard the complaint of principals that "the examination had taken him com-

pletely by surprise ; that the class had gone all to pieces." What real room for surprise except that he had not himself known it sooner ? Where have been his eyes, his ears, his thought, his untiring effort for the last forty weeks ? Perhaps in his office considering how teaching might be made a profession ; possibly wondering at the public depreciation of the worth of the public school and the consequent inadequacy of the principal's salary ; or sometimes, it may be, pitying the littleness of those who can be content to attend teachers' meetings month after month and year after year, discussing the same old questions, and labeling as new what they have had for twenty years.

He has a poor teacher ! Then it should not have been a surprise ; he should have known it before the end of the second week ; should have heard and known whether they could read audibly, clearly, intelligently ; whether they could comprehend a plain question and answer thoughtfully ; whether they understood fractions, could compute interest, draw an outline map, get the dimensions of a given field without turning to the book for the rule, or could avail himself of a short cut to the result.

The discipline should not be suffered to become such as to make study impossible, nor the instruction such as to leave progress doubtful. His influence should pervade the poor room like the sunlight, filling it with light and warmth even into its foulest corners, that the hearts of teacher and pupils may fairly glow with desire and hope of something better, nobler. No real examination should be given for which *he* has not prepared or approved the questions, which should fairly fill, but not exceed the requirements of the course ; and he should be so familiar with the aim, the methods, and results of the teacher's

efforts that he might safely promote a class without a stated examination.

Few, very few, are the teachers, who can not become fairly earnest, faithful, efficient workers under the kindly, wise, persevering influence of a worthy principal.

The principal, too, should so arrange the time of examinations and promotions that there should be no uncertain delay, but that teacher and pupil should start off strong and hearty for their work, at the beginning of the second and third terms as of the first, without the loss of five, ten, or fifteen days, in doubt where they are or what they are to do, and with an impulse and impetus that shall carry them on with spirit and zeal undiminished to the very end of the year, till they pass the line, as it were, at the end of the race, with the closing exercises of the year.

There is no school, perhaps, which has not some points of marked excellence, some teacher, unknown to herself, it may be, who in her wholesome influence over her pupils, in awakening interest, securing attention, in the presentation of some subject, or in winning a ready and thoughtful consideration and clear expression of topics and judgments, shows an unquestioned superiority in mental or moral gifts. There is, I think, rarely a *teacher* who does not present some meritorious indications deserving recognition; at least she may display some fault in common with ourselves which we had not before seen in its true deformity.

Not the least important of the principal's duties is to perceive the excellencies and to promote their spread among the other teachers, to assist the contagion of good and establish a quarantine against the bad. The good of one room should be carried to all the rooms of the school, like the fertilizing dust of the flowers, now borne

by the busy bee in his search for hidden sweets, now wafted by the floating insect in his pleasurable rounds, and now on the soft air that breathes around us.

Let the teacher, weak in one point, visit another who there is strong, and discuss what she has seen with the principal; let her visit other schools and bring back the report of her experiences. In her own school the principal himself can take her room for a half-hour, and for a half-day even, in her visits to other schools, ascertaining thus the progress of her class, or its deficiencies.

In spite of the frequent complaints of poor teachers, they are not all or generally unqualified; they have been under able and skillful teachers, have passed a scholastic examination to which many of our successful teachers would not care to submit; they have served two, six, ten months under the principal's eye as apprentices or cadets; and if they now fail, is it not fair, is it not just and right to look for the reasons of the failures in most cases to the principal?

Herein do I find the most important part of the principal's work and a partial answer to the question so often asked, "How shall we secure good teachers?" To the common reply of the theoretical teacher and pedagogical writer, that we must have normal schools, I desire to offer no word of dissent. If all our teachers could have a good normal training it can hardly be doubted that the school systems of our city, our State, and country, would be lifted to a higher plane, with a clearer and more life-giving atmosphere.

The normal school can do much; it gives something of the history of education and the work of its great leaders; teaches the elements of psychology in its direct application to pedagogy; leads its pupils to observe the thought of the child and the working of its yet unde-

veloped mind, and carefully and systematically to note the results of this or that method ; it teaches its pupils to think, to think for themselves, to reason upon their own closely observed facts, and to express their thoughts clearly, concisely, and freely ; it makes them familiar with various ways for interesting the childish heart and opening up his mind to the study of the things around him ; and, best of all, it inspires them with a love of the work, a kindling enthusiasm that shall go far to make them true students of childhood and successful workers, at last, in this noblest and most entrancing of pursuits.

And yet, with all this, so unlike are the conditions of the normal class-room and the school-room with its sixty embodied activities that the normal graduate, with her training, her theories, her enthusiasm, and her high expectations, will at the first prove a partial failure if left to herself without the guidance, the encouragement, the help of the sympathetic, the great-hearted, capable principal.

Our good teachers must be made largely in our own schools; sooner and better for the fitting preparation, but in the actual school-room must she learn to interest, to instruct, to develop, and at the same time to control with a quiet, discerning watchfulness, an easy grace, and an ever-growing power, and by the aid and wise direction of her principal.

Vacancies in our schools are of daily occurrence. In one there are always those below ready and willing to advance to the vacant place—the double-division teacher to the single room, the cadet to the double-division—all alive to the work, ambitious, able, progressive, with no necessity for looking beyond the walls of the school.

In another, how different the situation ! the cadet is weak, unequal to the charge of a room, for which a

supply is sought elsewhere; the first-grade teacher has become acquainted with her duties, and shrinks from the effort needed for a higher grade; a sixth, a seventh grade becomes vacant, and the city must be searched, the country scoured for a teacher equal to the place, while the several grade teachers plod on as before in their old, familiar round, without promotion, without ambition, and without meritorious desert.

Many an excellent teacher do we draw from the outlying districts and from the normal schools; but the best, most progressive, most thoroughly in earnest, and successful schools are those which make their own teachers; and from no one thing would I judge of the worth of a principal so confidently as from his success in converting these young, inexperienced, but bright and educated girls, into earnest, studious, skillful, and inventive teachers, ready at the principal's call to take this or that position, whatever it be, with full reliance upon his wisdom and discrimination, nor standing upon any supposed or imaginary rights that may be in the way of the best interests of the school.

Not long since I read in an educational journal an article upon school *discipline*, in which the writer said that "obedience must be immediate and absolute." In a well-ordered school the discipline should make a small demand upon the teacher's time or strength—should not be as the same writer states, "the most painful part of a teacher's work," but kindly, loving, winning. What more pleasing than to observe with watchful care the daily development of the mind, the will, the character? "Obedience immediate and absolute"? For the soldier on the battle's edge—yes; but for the child with his instincts of self-hood, his budding reason, his untrained will, and his intuitions of freedom, the thing is unreason-

able, absurd, and impossible. Which of us can at all times control his will or command his attention to a dull discourse, a stupid book, or an uninteresting recital? Prompt and cheerful compliance, I admit; but "immediate and absolute"? the words savor of the drill-master, the martinet, the tyrant, the despot, rather than of the teacher and guide of youth, and are destructive of all true education and worthy development.

With the quality of the discipline of the school the principal has much to do; the animating spirit that shall give shape to it all is his. Obedience, indeed, is a necessity, but an obedience based upon a respect for authority and an appreciation of good order and regard for a respected teacher.

I should probably be misunderstood if I should say, as I firmly believe, that the principal should *always* sustain the teacher; he should make her *feel*, should let the pupil *know* that he is with her, even when in error, as a firm and faithful friend and support. And in any untoward event should he kindly see her through and out of her difficulties before the thought of censure has taken shape. Not censure, but counsel, should be his, showing where was the error; how the direct issue might have been judiciously avoided and the insubordinate pupil led and lifted to a wiser way and a higher life, where the beauty of order and the necessity of subjection to reason and properly constituted authority would be clearly discerned and gladly acknowledged.

The principal, too, has much to do with the *mental growth* of his teachers. Our *teachers' meetings* are of necessity largely given to the discussion of methods, of the ways and means of school-teaching. She who would make teaching a profession must know of the underlying principles of which these methods are but the flower,

must make her reading broader, her studies deeper than the adopted text-book and supplemental reader.

The spirit of inquiry, of investigation, and experiment should be encouraged—a careful observation of methods and results, and the sound deduction of true means and methods. This rests largely with the principal. The reputations of to-day are not won in the high-school and college, but in the children's room; nor by the self-seeker, striving ever for a higher place, but by the self-forgetful worker, who sees in her little ones the promise of true, upright, honorable men and women for whom her best is all too little.

The thoughts that I have thus tried to present are not the results of any fine theorizing, and hardly the conclusions of any formal reasoning, but rather a simple record of what daily comes under my observation. How often have I seen a teacher, a whole school, lifted from the low level of weak purpose and dead performance to a truer realization of the educational ideal, receiving the breath of life from the living principal, become earnest, faithful, and zealous of good work.

No longer are their pupils turned upon the street, lost to all hope or chance of a worthy citizenship, but with an ever-growing self-control and an increasing interest in the studies, made attractive by a more pleasing presentation, are seen pressing forward into the higher grades, perhaps to the high-school and college, and surely to a worthy manhood or womanhood.

And some, too, have I distinctly in mind of bright souls and of high promise who, for the lack of this inspiration and upholding, have seemingly parted with their former zeal and grown weary of their unrecognized efforts, fill in the slow-going hours with half-hearted work and meager results.

It makes little difference what stuff a teacher is made of, she can not long stand out alone in good, earnest, honest, healthful endeavor against the blighting miasma of an incompetent, unfaithful, unreliable principal.

The pupils themselves soon inhale the unwholesome air, and no longer respond to the touch of her quickening spirit, grow careless of their conduct, negligent of duties, and forgetful of their own good names and the fair fame of their school. No investigation is needed to learn the character of such a school; like the darkness of Egypt, it can be felt.

We no longer have the little school-house under the hill, with its single teacher, principal and assistant in one, working out her own success or failure; but each is a part of the one great system. The principal alone can make or unmake it. The work, which in part I have outlined, no one can do but he. Much is asked of him, but no more than I often see performed; a high ideal is marked out for him, but only because I have witnessed its realization and made it my thought.

It is this that makes me feel, and feel confident, that of our seventeen hundred teachers and ninety thousand pupils in our schools in Chicago, soon to be the men and women of our country, and, I trust, her pride, many to the last hour of their lives will look back with loving hearts and grateful thoughts for the right impulse, the worthy direction, and true inspiration they received at school through the wise control, the kind interest, and the healthful influence of their school principal.

X.

THE WORK OF THE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT.

To many an earnest, enterprising principal, wholly devoted to the success and progress of his school, it doubtless sometimes occurs that if he were left free from the limitations of the course of study, unhampered by the rules of the board of education and without the annoying interferences from the superintendent's office, he could make a truly good school.

And equally true is it, I think, that not a few class teachers feelingly realize at times that could they have entire and full control of their rooms, unmolested by the questions and suggestions of the principal and his frequent examinations, she could wield a power and influence over her loved and loving pupils that should advance them in learning, intelligence, and moral strength, which should insure their future success in life, and make of them the fairest jewels in the crown of her rejoicing.

But the thoughtful teacher should soon comprehend that to the generous appreciation and sometimes kind forbearance of the principal is due much of her present success and the opportunity for giving to her class the best she has to give.

The visit of the superintendent, instead of an annoying interference, should be looked forward to with pleasure, with the hope that some useful remark, some timely and suggestive question may give her thought a wiser direction, afford some helpful aid, and awaken a deeper interest in the pupils, which shall prove an inspiration, an encouragement, amid the endless toils and trials of a teacher's life.

The rules of the board are but needful guides in directing the management and work of the schools, bringing them all into one harmonious whole, free from jarring discords and incongruous results; and far from limiting the efforts of worthy teacher or school, the outline of study may well be the most useful and efficient helper in directing the endeavor of principal and teachers to the most beneficial results.

No course of study is the mere haphazard, spasmodic effort of any one man, but a cultured growth, the result of many experiences, and the combined thought and wisdom of many doers and thinkers.

In carrying out this course under the direction of the board—judging from the methods of our larger cities—there seems to be a wide divergence of opinion as to the true work of the superintendent, a matter the more to be deplored, since the fact of superintendency has become so universal.

Not only in the cities and large towns, but in the counties and country villages, the desirability of this supervision has ceased to be a question; and it is of the first importance that his service should be in the right direction, if our schools are to reap that rich harvest of good which alone can warrant the inevitable outlay which his employment necessitates.

The superintendent has become an important factor in our American schools, and if they are advanced and improved, the glad results are to come from the wise thought and broad nature of the superintendent, aided by the cheerful and generous co-operation of principals and teachers.

The real, efficient supervision of the individual school, with its fifteen or twenty teachers, must be made by the principal, and the principal alone; he only can, by daily

or more frequent visits, know of the work of the teacher in the different subjects and of her influence over the pupils with their different characters and previous training; he only, by happy hint and timely suggestion, can lead the timid, thoughtful, earnest girl out of her depths of despond into the light and life of intelligent, fruitful effort; he too alone can best know of the merits and demerits of the several teachers, their application, industry and promptness, and their influence, through their personal character and instruction, upon their pupils and the community—the people who rely upon them for the proper education and development of their children, their hope.

The principal is the unit of the school through whom the superintendent must make his influence felt, and without whose sympathetic assistance not much good can come to the school, the district, and the ever-waiting citizens.

Not but that many a school without board of education and superintendent may show earnest and faithful work; that here and there from the little house under the hill—like that near which we each had our little spring from which we drank unadulterated water, and from the grove behind gathered the lady's-slipper, and the wild lily from the meadow in front, to the disgust of the mower whose scythe became entangled in the trampled and twisted grasses—from such may have come some of the foremost men and women of our land. There, too, is the school at Rugby, which yet under Arnold had many ways that would not be tolerated to-day; and Dr. Taylor, of Andover, alone in his thorough, accurate, minute drill, very far, however, from the approved instruction of the present time. His art died with him.

And, occasionally, may we find a school famed for its

benign, beneficent influences, like that of De Koven, at Racine, whose personal worth and guiding mind were the inspiration and the making of many a fortunate youth; and that prince of teachers, Dr. Hopkins, with whom an acquaintance was a liberal education, whose noble nature and character, as transparent as his thought, with his broad, deep current of learning and noble manhood, made him a master in the world of men and mind.

But Hopkins, Taylor, and Arnold were outside the common minds, and not to be judged by common rules; and the statesmen from the poor country school became such not often from the instruction given, but from their own inborn, highborn natures, great in spite of their limitations.

An educated gentleman not long ago told me of the teacher who had changed and made his life; not magnetic, not skillful as a teacher, who did not know there was such a science as psychology, but had that somewhat in his makeup which impressed itself upon his mind so as to mold and make his life and his success in life. And in every school, however poor, may we find some teacher from whom lessons of wisdom and worth may be learned —some way, some method, some art, which we would not meet elsewhere.

Yet there is no teacher, no school, that attains to its highest possibilities alone, shut in from intercourse and association with other schools and other minds; and the teacher or principal who feels secure of his superiority, disdaining the thought and the work of his fellows, will inevitably in some ways fall behind in the race for excellence. His instruction in some branches, or his modes of discipline will and must suffer in the comparison with the work of those whom he ignorantly ignores and contemns; and his methods, all original and his own, will to

the discerning eye and discriminating ear, betray his want of knowledge or appreciation of some unrecognized district.

How many a time have I found the principal and the teacher glorying in their superior methods and wiser devices, all their own, when to my mind came up the picture of other schools and other rooms, where, in those same lines of thought and instruction, a far better work was done, where broader views and a clearer comprehension and more useful applications were had of the worth of their supposed novel plans.

It is not from any one unassisted mind that much good, much wisdom is to come or much progress be made, but they who gather up the results of many minds and combine them into one harmonious substantial basis for further development are the benefactors, the true reformers of the race. He who relies solely upon his own powers will ever leave some part exposed, some portion of his work inefficient, some point defenseless.

The weak part of Achilles was not his head, or his heart, but his heel, yet it was fatal all the same. We must be "all for each and each for all" in a large, a generous sense, if we would do the best for our pupils, our schools, our city, or ourselves, eager to learn and ready to impart with a discerning judgment, a wise liberality, and a noble magnanimity.

Nor can the superintendent sit in his office chair and work out the problem of school-life and discover what shall prove a blessing to the system. He must have these hours of study and thought, but from the living, working school must come the material with which he builds, and from which shall proceed those plans and processes that shall secure the progress and well-being of our schools and the advancement of teacher and pupil. The super-

intendent may with an active brain and shrewd skill devise his fine plans and elaborate his methods for the promotion of his purposes, but too often the first touch of nature as found in the child or the teacher will burst his brilliant bubbles and leave him wondering at the causes of his failure.

It is very little that the superintendent, unaided, can do; little can he outline in his office that shall assist them in their efforts for instruction, culture, or character; rather in the school-room must he with nice observation, with keen discernment, and wise judgment, obtain the knowledge, wisdom, and thorough understanding which shall enable him to aid the unskilled, direct the inexperienced, and rightly advise the untrained and unsuccessful teacher. His office study and his abstract theories will avail him little, unless he see and carefully note the earnest, devoted, and sometimes despairing teacher, as well as the aimless and thoughtless denizen of the school-room, before their fifty or sixty restless and bewildering pupils, often ignorant of their language, unaccustomed to their ways, guileless of American thought and American tradition, but who are to learn to read, to think, and to talk in the American tongue, and think American thought and become lovers of our city, our country, and our schools.

No insignificant task is this for the young teacher, and no unworthy problem that which is presented to the city superintendent. Much of his time, I think, must be passed in the school if he is to be of use in advancing the work there done. In a city large enough to afford or require for the work a corps of assistants, he may visit less, but the same result must be attained through them, and he, seeing with their eyes and hearing with their ears and thinking with their thoughts, must still continue his

familiarity with the teaching teacher, the studying and reciting pupil, and the supervising, instructing, and encouraging, directing principal.

Less real to him will be the school-room, less vivid his impressions, less graphic his pictures of good or unsuccessful work; but he may be more than compensated for this loss by the more frequent observation, the nicer supervision, and the united judgments of his assistants, and in a careful comparison of their reported experiences.

But, even so, he can not wisely forego the privilege—nay, the very aliment of his own life, as a superintendent—which is to be found only in his frequent personal presence in the school-room, in sympathetic contact with teacher and pupils in their daily and hourly endeavor.

Without this, even the well-considered observations and reports of his assistants will lose their vitality and ofttimes ineffectual fall upon his untrained and uncomprehending ear.

One must, I think, have seen something of the uplifted, rugged hills and the sweet valley and rich meadows, with their green fields and golden harvests, with here and there the forest and the grove, with the rippling rills and babbling brooks, ere he can fully appreciate the finest and truest description of country and rural scenery and life. He must know the words before he can read readily or understandingly.

Nor is it as a stern inquisitor, severe censor, or petty, fault-finding critic that the superintendent or his assistants present themselves from time to time in the school-building, but rather as friendly observers, as kind advisers, and glad helpers are they there, that by some timely suggestion, some suggestive question, or thoughtful remark they may lead the inquiring, faithful teacher into better ways, with wiser discipline and more fruitful lines of thought

which shall increase her power and influence over her pupils, make her example more effective, and her instruction more fruitful of benefit to herself and more conducive of good to the thought, the heart, the real, wholesome development of her pupils in sound scholarship and well-founded, self-reliant characters.

Free with his words of encouragement, when needed or when there is room for hope—and few so poor as to deserve no word of comfort—and even to the seemingly hopeless, with whom no help can avail much for real improvement, should his words still be kind and inspiring, both for her own sake, for her self-respect, and to relieve the baleful pressure, and lessen the evils of her weak rule, so long as she and her ineffective measures shall endure. But at the fitting time, when requested by the committee or the board, should the superintendent give his firm, though fateful opinion of schools and teachers, with no relenting regard for results.

Thus only can he maintain his own self-respect, or long retain the respect and confidence of those who rightfully look to him for information and advice, or give to the schools and deserving teachers that support and encouragement which are their rightful due.

The superintendent is no less the confidential adviser than the executive of the board, and its members may and should command his best judgment as to the merits and demerits of teachers and their qualifications, their claims for promotion, and for whatever concerns the interests of our schools and teachers.

Even to the hopeless one, as I have said, should he speak words of kindness and encouragement in the interests of herself and her pupils, upon both of whom cold condemnation could result only in greater disorder, poorer instruction, and a greater multiplicity of the infelicities of

a weak, harassed, and disconsolate teacher hopelessly trying to control and direct a room of restless and refractory rebels, who have learned to love disorder and to rejoice in unlimited and careless, because unchecked insubordination and riot. And when, at the end of the year, she is kindly informed that her work is not satisfactory, that her class has fallen below their natural and expected grade, and that her services are no longer needed, why should she insist upon the injustice of her treatment, that she has had no notice of her failure, that the superintendent has always commended her work, that she has had no suggestion that her efforts were not praiseworthy, with all that untold variety of pleading and persuasion to which the innocent members of the board have to submit from incensed relations, interested friends, and sympathetic politicians.

The superintendent may in some visit have said: "Your *reading* is better than when I was here before; the order is somewhat improved; that map-drawing is quite desirable; I rather think you have improved in numbers; your work in history is not so bad; your geography is not such a bugbear after all, as you thought it."

Possessed of any sensitiveness or discernment, she should have understood the meaning—that the reading was poor, the enunciation bad, the discipline disgraceful, the number work problematical, the history just endurable, and the geography anything but what should be expected of a Chicago teacher, and that the superintendent, in a few kindly, thoughtful words, had sought unnoticed to put her upon a better and more progressive way. If the engineer is careless or ignorant of his duties we do not wait till he has wrecked a train or two, before filling his place with one of more assured fitness for the position. A well-trained, thoroughly educated child is of

more worth than a locomotive, and a well-ordered school more than a trunk-line.

If the work of the superintendent is upon this line—and such is stronger and stronger my belief as the years go by—if he is to breathe a higher, nobler life into the schools, awaken a new interest, develop worthier motives, induce better methods, and place teacher and pupil upon true paths of progress, opening and enriching the sources of health, happiness, and real wisdom, the glad result is not to be reached or advanced by any system of stated and rigid examination.

Now and then, it is true, at the request of a teacher or at his own motion, if he likes, he may conduct a casual examination or hear a recitation, but all that is merely incidental and a very small and unimportant part of the superintendent's work. A much greater, a more valuable service is his than to convert himself into a petty examiner and figurer of averages and percentages, a gauger of intellect, growth, and character by means of a lead pencil.

Such examinations are almost of necessity belittling and narrowing and deadening to all true instruction, healthful development, high purpose, and worthy effort on the part of teacher and pupil alike, wresting from the teacher her own individuality, the very essence of her usefulness, depriving her of every motive for broader culture and self-improvement, or for the right education and true growth of her pupils.

Her days and nights, instead of being spent in any useful employment or diversion, must be devoted to the conning and poring over of old examination questions, comparing averages, and in bewildering wonderment as to what is likely to come next.

The welfare of her pupils is forgotten or neglected,

and they are made the innocent victims of her incessant and unmitigated drill upon the worthless detail which she dreams, or imagines, may be dumped upon them at the coming of the superintendent.

Such examinations may tend to uniformity of work in the different schools, but a uniformity of low motive, of petty purpose, and paltry performances, changing our school system from a living, thinking, feeling, and willing organism into a dead and unthinking machine whose highest purpose seems to be to exhibit to the admiring maker the regularity and precision of its own movements.

What a parody upon true education, natural development, normal growth, and the formation of character is this effort, by frequent repetition and endless drill, to prepare a class to pass the superintendent's expected examination !

Uniformity in a system of schools like ours, where pupils often pass from one school to another is desirable, nay, essential to the welfare of all. But we want not a uniformity of low ideal and feeble execution, but a uniformity of high emprise, of noble purpose, and grand achievement.

And the superintendent, by his quiet suggestion to teacher and principal, by his careful observation of well-noted methods and of praiseworthy results, is to carry the excellencies, the first fruits of the best, the most satisfactory, to the weaker, the anxious, toiling teacher, that we may be "each for all and all for each," the wisest teachers profiting even from the failures of the poorer, and the poorest gaining a new power and greater influence, and a wiser, firmer control from the observed methods, the ingenious devices, and the ways to success of the most successful.

And the greatest, grandest work of the superintendent is to carry the best, the wisest, and the worthiest of each and every school into all the schools, that teachers and pupils, zealous of good work, may not lack of the nourishment which we have in store, but, free from envy and narrow rivalry, with a generous charity may receive with thankfulness every good, and impart with cheerfulness, without any patronizing air of superiority, whatever may serve to place all our schools upon one common basis of progress and usefulness.

It is this intercommunication between teachers and schools, under the direction of the superintendent, which alone can insure to them all a wholesome life and fruitful progress.

We, as teachers, do not often realize, I think, how little of what we pride ourselves upon, is truly original with us. We have found one suggestion here, and another there, have seen some device, read of some plan, or in conversation with others had some thought or train of thought started, from which our own views and methods have been enforced or improved. Upon the presentation of his plans by any reformer, some dozen, or hundred even, at once start up with the cry that "We have had that for years," which in a limited sense is probably true.

And, indeed, with the schools, as with almost every industrial discovery and invention—as in the case of electricity, the telegraph, the telephone, and the ruling of a copy-book—the civil courts have to be called in to decide where the credit belongs. And even the discovery of America it is vainly sought to ascribe to some forlorn and shipwrecked Icelander from whom nothing useful ever came to himself or the world.

Under the free light of heaven civilization and educa-

tion alike advance, like the coming of spring from the south, with a common movement along the whole line, a little retarded here and there by some hinderance, some opposing breaths, temporarily delaying, but not preventing the gladsome budding and blossoming of the plants and trees.

Those of you old enough to remember the old solemn New England parlor, opened only on occasions of marriage, death, or the annual Thanksgiving, can readily recall the condition of the close, musty, confined air of the sacred place. And many a younger heart can probably find on memory's tablet the picture of a school or schoolroom, needing no aid from without, sufficient unto itself, but which to one familiar with the real movement of the age, fell like the stifling atmosphere of the old parlor, killing all joyful life, all present improvement, and awakening the kindly wish that some stray fresh breeze might sweep through and vitalize those poor, self-sufficient souls.

Sometimes the visiting superintendent may chance upon the school or teacher seemingly insensible to the onward movement, or solemnly resisting his efforts to secure a better development. The negligence, inaccuracy, and the slouchiness which he meets in September or October boldly face him again in December, in March, and in June. His hints and his suggestive advice have fallen upon deaf, or unwilling ears, and produced no perceptible results.

But happily the hinderance is not forever, the great tide of warmth and life with added force at last sweeps on and over the opposing obstacle, covering the land with beauty and gladdening the heart with fragrance, flower, and fruitage.

But in the far more frequent cases he finds the teacher

or the school failing of the best or best directed effort or desired results, and with a word of counsel departs fondly hoping, yet sometimes doubting of the outcome, nor often finds his hopes wholly belied.

The word, or the thought which he had dropped had taken root in a living mind, been nurtured with zealous care, watered, it may be, with tears, and he now surveys with gladness a well-directed, industrious class in full harmony with an earnest, interested, and smiling, happy teacher—happy in the consciousness of her inspiring influence over her studious and admiring pupils, whom she had formerly met with a feeling of dread, if not repulsion, as incorrigible dolts or rebels, but from whom to-day she would part with sorrow.

The pupils may not be richly clad, but they will have cleaner hands, more orderly desks, and a less-littered floor.

No fancy sketch is this, wrought out in the study, but a faithful record of not long past experiences, and one of my most hopeful encouragements and fullest satisfactions.

We are not all born teachers, any more than poets, but an earnest cheerful heart, with willing, sympathetic endeavor and unfailing hope, can, under wise counsel, bring a worthy success within the reach of a large majority of intelligent and cultured men and women.

To the superintendent from his wider and more varied observations of school-life than the most active and keenly observant principal can have comes the frequent reminder of little ways and doings to which he can not close his mind or heart, or, in justice to our own schools and himself, as well as to our wiser and more successful teachers, refrain at proper times from alluding. The teacher, perhaps from always having to do with inferiors in years and

attainments, from always being in authority over others, instead of dealing with equals, very naturally and easily falls into the habit of saying and doing those things which no one would think of employing with one of you or with me.

A pupil may steal a bite from an apple, perhaps, during a dull recitation, and the teacher remarks that he must have had a poor, sorry breakfast. His parents, perhaps, are poor, and the ever-sensitive boy, stung to madness at having his poverty thrown in his face in the presence of his mates, angrily retorts, "I guess I had as good a breakfast as you did," and he is sent to the principal for punishment. But was he not in the—I was going to say in the right? No, not right, but wholly wrong, but not nearly so guilty as his teacher. Another partially fails in a recitation. "I wonder what school you came from?" sneers the teacher. "From one quite as good as this," comes the fitting and almost inevitable response from the high-spirited and gallant lad. Now a pupil comes in a few minutes late for the afternoon session, and, of course, is sent up for correction. The principal finds that he had been kept in for an hour at the close of the morning session, contrary to specific instructions, and had not time to go home and return. Who, in the name of justice, but the teacher is the proper candidate for suspension?

But I need not multiply real or supposed instances of this petty wrong-doing. You can all supply them from memory or experience.

Alas, for this authority—or the consciousness and show of authority—which has chilled the heart of many an otherwise humane teacher, placing him or her upon that lofty pedestal of assumed and false superiority around which breathe no soft airs of kindness or courtesy!

A gentleman was telling me the other day of his son,

a bright, courteous, possibly mischievous little fellow, who said that he always lifted his hat to his teacher, but never received any recognition. The father told him he had better not do it any more. What, think you, was the probable thought of the proud little gentleman as to the character of his hitherto respected teacher, and what the possible effect upon his conduct in school and his future life?

And it is my solemn, well-founded conviction that in a large majority of the cases reported to the principal or the superintendent of impertinence, impudence, and insolence on the part of boys or girls, the teacher, in thoughtlessness or malice, has been the aggressor, by some ill-timed or sarcastic remark, and is the one, and only culpable one, who should have been sent to the principal, the superintendent, or the board of education. I recollect but one such case during my twenty-odd years in the high-school, to which, with a moment's pause, I made no reply. But at the close of school I quietly noticed that the culprit lingered at his desk, seemingly arranging his books and papers, till all the rest had gone, when he came up with a frank, gentlemanly acknowledgment of his error, and never again offended. Nor do I recall many names of pupils referred to me for insubordination, when I have not been obliged to blush at the name of teacher, upon learning the occasion of the trouble. The intelligent pupil does not wantonly insult a respected, kindly teacher. So many rooms do I know where the school-life runs on in kind and courteous harmony, with the spirit of industry and improvement beaming on every face, with no outward emblems or apparent show of authority, no harsh words or stinging reply, but pupil and teacher kind, courteous, and respectful to each other—like friends in pleasant intercourse or engaged in some loved pursuit—alike in

the districts of the poor and the rich, that hardly a day of my life goes by without some "confirmation" of my belief, "strong as proofs of Holy Writ."

This simple lifting of the hat, this grateful look of recognition to a pupil, though in the primary grades, goes further toward securing his respect and confidence—toward making the true man and woman—than many a lesson in geography and arithmetic, and is one of the best aids in making instructions in geography and arithmetic effectual. And surely the teacher can ill afford to be less respectful and courteous to her pupils than she would have them be to herself! The golden rule is quite as efficacious in the school-room as on the street or on the boards of trade, in advancing the welfare of man, as well in his childhood as in his age.

The bravest are the tenderest.

Next in importance to this work of promoting the growth and development of good teachers in our own schools, the surest proof to the superintendent of the efficiency of a school, and of his own success, is the selection and proper assignment of those teachers whom our ever increasing enrollment makes it needful to employ. In a small town or for a single district piratical raids into the surrounding country might be made, by promise of higher place or better pay bringing away their brightest and best. But with our many schools, in all of which we have an equal and undivided interest, we can ill afford to prey upon each other; and I know of nothing more to be deprecated and condemned than for a principal of one school—by notice of a vacancy, by sly suggestion, or intimation of interest and affection—to awaken a restlessness in a teacher of another school, leading or inducing her to seek a transfer to himself. Transfers are, indeed,

to be made, on account of distance or fitness, but of this the superintendent should judge in the interests of the teachers and the schools.

With the throng of applicants, young and old, for positions, the teachers' examination seems a necessity, for the protection of the members of the board, as well as of the superintendent. This examination may show little of fitness for the position of teacher, but it does indicate one important element—some degree of scholarship.

When, in the high-school, I used sometimes to say—and even now do not think that I was wholly wrong—that for an assistant I would prefer a young graduate of superior attainments, of good promise, and pleasing presence, to almost any other; scholarly, ambitious, agreeable, progressive, not yet hardened into a stolid, self-sufficient routiner.

This fine scholarship is of prime importance in the high and in the grammar schools; and, perhaps, one of the weakest points in our schools to-day is the lack of a broader, more accurate scholarship in the higher grades for instruction in history, geography, arithmetic, grammar, and literature.

For some ten years, in my examinations for a teacher's certificate or for admission to the high-school, I have given one question calling for the syntax or construction of certain words; and to-day a very large majority of the candidates apparently do not know the meaning of the word syntax. They will, in answer, perhaps name the parts of speech, go stumbling through the old humdrum, common noun, third person, singular number, neuter gender, and objective case, but not one word touching syntax.

The distinction between common and proper nouns,

singular and plural, could be learned in fifteen minutes had it not been done already in the second grade; gender is of no use whatever in English nouns, any more than person.

All this, I say, has been done and finished in the second grade; and why, in the name of all that is precious for the fair unfolding of sunny childhood and bright, happy youth, our pupils should still be held down to this perfunctory farce called parsing, I confess passes my comprehension and staggers the imagination.

And I could devoutly pray that henceforth never might a good, honest, unoffending English word be subjected to the torture and rack of that old parsing—common noun, third person, etc. And it is my earnest hope and sincere desire that in future examinations Chicago candidates, at least, may know what is meant by syntax, and not foist off upon me that ridiculous and mummified formula for parsing. Our children ask us for bread, and we give them a stone.

Individually, I believe that the interests of the public school would be advanced if, without an examination, a certain percentage of the graduates of our high-schools and normal schools—nor would I exclude the real college—could be admitted to our lists upon the recommendation of the principals or presidents of such institutions, based not upon scholarship alone, but upon character and true worthiness. The principal knows more of the culture, promptness, perseverance, the capabilities, and moral influence of the pupil than any, the fairest examination can give us.

This method, I believe, would supply us with teachers of wider culture, of finer instincts, of higher general intelligence, and a deeper devotion to the welfare and instruction of the almost countless little ones that crowd

our schools than is possible by any other method. And I believe the day is not far distant when nothing less than a high-school, normal, or college graduate of advanced scholarship, good address, and courteous manners, and a heartiness for the work, will be admitted to the teacher's desk in our public schools.

The members of the board of education, with their business or professional duties, can not, and should not, be expected to know much of the school-room work of many teachers; nor can the superintendent merely of his own observations intelligently meet the demand. He must largely rely upon the visiting superintendents, his assistants, for his knowledge of the school-work of individual teachers.

Thus re-enforced, he is the only one who can in many cases act intelligently and wisely for the system in its entirety. By his advice and suggestion should promotion to places of honor and influence with corresponding emolument be made. A sad day would it be for our own, or any system of schools, if ever personal influence or individual favor should place the undeserving or unworthy in positions of increased responsibility and remuneration.

Such unmerited advancement does, and ever must, demoralize to a greater or less extent the teaching force of our schools, leading the ambitious worker to feel that promotion depends not upon faithful and successful service, and filling the hearts of the earnest, ever dutiful, and deserving teacher, with distrust and well-founded discouragement.

No higher, holier trust can be reposed in any board or body of citizens than this of furnishing cultivated, refined, worthy, and successful teachers to our public schools, upon which so largely depend the intelligence, the character,

the aspiration, and the hopes of those who are so soon to control and direct the social and moral forces of our loved city.

Under the direction of the board, upon the judgment of the superintendent, based as it is upon his own observation and the carefully compared and united advice of his assistants, should all advancements be made, and any general departure from this course can only result in a weakening of our teaching force, a neglect of vital interests, a letting down of our higher ideals, and a disastrous effect upon our public schools. Nor can the principals' association and grade institute be overlooked in this outline of the superintendent's work and influence. Through the principals largely must the superintendent reach the teachers and the schools. His more important directions to teachers may well be reported to the principals. Many a thought and useful device may be given to the individual teachers, but his visits are too brief and infrequent to effect much unassisted. On the principal must he rely to see his thought made fruitful, his devices utilized, and his recommendations given opportunity.

In the principals' association the prime questions of management can be discussed and the methods of instruction given a thoughtful hearing, and the attention directed to those points demanding special consideration.

The grade institute almost of necessity is chiefly given to methods—the ways and means of carrying on the daily work of the school-room. With two hundred new and inexperienced teachers each year, even to hold our own, without any advance, many an old direction must be repeated.

I have long and often tried to devise a plan by which our inexperienced teachers might be brought together two or three times a week and instructed in the principles of

education, in what, with a little strain of the imagination, might be called psychology—some knowledge of the child-mind, and how to increase this knowledge, how to impart information and make it abiding—how to quicken interest, secure attention, cultivate perseverance, and promote close study and fruitful investigation.

Through these institutes should the superintendent be brought into closer and more familiar relations with teachers and principals, and from them should flow influences for good into every school and every school-room, that all alike, with an intelligent purpose, might unitedly direct their thought and their endeavor to the one object and end desired—to the making all our schools pleasing, profitable, and progressive—onward all, with no unfortunate lingerer left behind.

In arranging for the work of the several assistants in our own city it has seemed preferable to make the division by districts rather than by grades—by vertical rather than horizontal planes—as the work of each grade is so closely related to the preceding and following grades, and can be more wisely supervised and directed by one who knows both what has been done and what is to follow.

It seems desirable, too, that each assistant superintendent, as far as possible, should at least once visit all the schools, that the board may have the benefit of their several opinions upon the merits and demerits of teachers and schools as well as that the instruction may be essentially uniform throughout the city and each enjoy the advantages of all.

Each assistant superintendent goes forth clothed with the full authority of the superintendent's office, and though not so abundant in works, should be as truly interested in the success of the schools in one part of the city as in another, with no desire to improve one at the expense of

another, but with a willingness to preserve and promote an equality of benefits.

And in any observed faults or deficiencies in matters of instruction each should feel perfectly free, without fear of encroaching upon another's domains, or conflict of authority, to use his best wisdom and effort, by counsel and direction, for the good of each and every school.

To the merely material work of the school, the construction, furnishing, and repairing of school-buildings, important as these are, the superintendent should give little of his time or his thought. All this can much better be left to the committees of the board, familiar with business and business ways.

And what nobler monument to any man's unselfish devotion to the interests of the schools and the public could be raised than some of our later structures, perfect in their appointments, their lighting, heating, and ventilation? And to no public interests, I think, will our citizens contribute more cheerfully of their substance than to any needful provision for the education, the health, and the physical as well as mental development of their children.

At the late meeting in Nashville a prominent member of the National Association said that the first requisite for a good school was a good school-building; and yet by far the greater part of those who sat around him on the platform as the honored fruits and worthy exemplars of the public school had, I believe, received their early education in the much decried little country school-house by the road side, sometimes shaded and shielded by a poplar or a maple, and more often exposed to the glaring gleam of the summer sun and the bleak blasts of the wintry winds.

No, my friends, the superintendent has higher duties

than the laying of brick and mortar and the construction of sidewalks and sewers. He should know, of course, of the condition, the fitness or unfitness of the buildings, where—and none so well as he—new buildings are needed, and where the means and appliances for good, effective instruction are wanting, and should be able and ready to report to the board of education what additional facilities are needed, but always giving of his best thought and his best endeavor to the advancement of our schools in sound learning, healthful development, and well-grounded, self-controlled, consistent characters.

And I believe that there is no influence for the uplifting and forwarding of our schools more potent than that of a superintendent relying upon the support and confidence of the board in his wisdom and integrity, despite some errors of judgment, laboring ever to recognize the deserving, to aid the striving but yet unsuccessful, and to eliminate the unworthy.

He it is who, with the board of education back of him to review his action and enforce his approved instructions, can, with the hearty co-operation of principals and teachers, give a new life to our schools, in the meaning and spirit of the rules carrying out the essentials of the course of study, and guiding our schools into the ways of healthful growth, true progress, and genuine development, making them the nurseries of a wise education and virtuous habits, an incentive to individual effort, and the crowning glory of our city.

THE END.

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Pages 69 to 89.

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Pages 89 to 110.

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3. The necessity that the teacher be familiar with the recorded thought and experience of other teachers.

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6. The value of definiteness, progression, and selection of essentials in class work.
7. The teacher's self-control and the considerate treatment of pupils constitute the first means of right discipline.

Pages 110 to 128.

HOW THE SCHOOL DEVELOPS CHARACTER.

1. Character the one chief aim of school life.
2. Character-building consists in training, disciplining the mind.
3. The personal will, the essential element of character.
4. Accuracy of thought, intellectual integrity, the basis and condition of moral and spiritual worth.
5. The kind, sympathetic, personal influence of the teacher the most efficient means of developing moral character.

Pages 128 to 150.

THE CLASS RECITATION.

1. The recitation the true test of success in the teacher and the real opportunity for success to the pupil.
2. Should call for the expression of the pupil's judgments and conclusions rather than for his memorized statements.
3. Should assume and provide material for due study hours in the schoolroom.
4. Continuous, interested attention of every pupil a necessary element in a good recitation.
5. The love of learning to be fostered by the manner of conducting the recitation.
6. Why the written exercise can not be deemed a recitation in any true sense.

Pages 150 to 174.

THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL.

1. The principal's influence the determining element in the character of the school.
2. His knowledge and influence to be acquired and exerted in the classrooms, not at his office.
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6. Consistent and uniform sustaining of his teachers in their discipline of classes.
7. His provisions for advancing the professional and mental growth of his teachers.
8. His direct and indirect influence exerted upon the habits and characters of his pupils.

Pages 175 to 198.

THE WORK OF THE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT.

1. His immediate function to inspire and to encourage.
2. Must act chiefly through the principals upon the individual teachers.
3. Needs a right proportion of office work and of direct contact with the working school and class.
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